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THE DRAMATIC
WORKS
OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq;

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING

The COMMISSARY.

The LAME LOVER.

|| The BANKRUPT.
AND
|| The COZENERS.



LONDON:

Printed for P. VAILLANT, T. LOWNDES, W. NICOLL,
S. BLADON, T. CADELL, and G. KEARSLEY.

THE DRAMATIC

WORKS

BY

W. G. L. G.



T H E
COMMISSARY.

A
C O M E D Y
IN THREE ACTS.

As it is Performed at the
THEATRE-ROYAL in the HAY-MARKET.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

Queis facile est ædem conducere flumina portus,
Siccandum eluvium, portandum ad busta cadaver.

Juv. Sat. III.

Criminibus debent hortos, prætoria, mensas,
Argentum vetus, & stantem extra pocula Caprum.

Ibid. Sat. I.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N,
Printed for P. V A I L L A N T.
MDCCLXXIII.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

IN THREE ACTS.
C O M E D Y.

As it is Performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in the Hay-Market.

BY SAMUEL JOSEPH, JR.



[Faint circular stamp or seal visible through the paper]

Alphitoea vetus, & Alpheia exilis pediculi Caprivi.
Cinnamomum debent habere, fortassis, menthae.

THE THIRD EDITION.

Printed for R. VAILLANT.
LONDON.
MCCCLXXXIII.

Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

Dramatis Personæ.

Mr. ZAC. FUNGUS,
Mr. ISAAC FUNGUS,
Mr. GRUEL,
YOUNG LOVEIT,
Dr. CATGUT,
SIMON,
Mr. BRIDOUN,
Mr. PADUASOY,
Mr. HARPY,
LA FLEUR,
JOHN,
A Hackney-Coachman.

Mr. FOOTE.
Mr. COSTOLLO,
Mr. SHUTER.
Mr. DAVIS,
Mr. PARSONS.
Mr. PRESTON.
Mr. GARDNER.
Mr. KEEN,
Mr. TINDAL.
Mr. JOHNSON.
Mr. MARSHALL,
Mr. PARSONS.

W O M E N.

Mrs. MECHLIN,
Mrs. LOVEIT,
DOLLY,
JENNY,

Miss CHENEY.
Mr. SHUTER.
Miss REYNOLDS.
Mrs. GRANGER.

Dramatis Personae

Mr. Isaac Fungus,	Mr. Isaac Fungus,
Mr. Grub,	Mr. Grub,
Young Lovett,	Young Lovett,
Dr. Catgut,	Dr. Catgut,
Simon,	Simon,
Mr. Bridoun,	Mr. Bridoun,
Mr. Paddyboy,	Mr. Paddyboy,
Mr. Harry,	Mr. Harry,
La Fleur,	La Fleur,
John,	John,
A Hackney-Cochman,	A Hackney-Cochman,
Mr. Parsons,	Mr. Parsons,
Mr. Johnson,	Mr. Johnson,
Mr. Timbrel,	Mr. Timbrel,
Mr. Keek,	Mr. Keek,
Mr. Cardner,	Mr. Cardner,
Mr. Preston,	Mr. Preston,
Mr. Parson,	Mr. Parson,
Mr. Foots,	Mr. Foots,

W O M E N

Mrs. Mechlin,	Mrs. Mechlin,
Mrs. Lovett,	Mrs. Lovett,
Dolly,	Dolly,
Jenny,	Jenny,
Mrs. Granger,	Mrs. Granger,
Mrs. Rattou,	Mrs. Rattou,
Mrs. Shuter,	Mrs. Shuter,
Mrs. Cawley,	Mrs. Cawley,

T H E
COMMISSARY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Mrs. MECHLIN's House.

(*Loud knocking at the Door.*)

Enter JENNY.

RAP, rap, rap, up-stairs and down, from morning to night; if this same Commissary stays much longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

SIMON *without.*

Sim. Is Mrs. Mechlin at home?

Jen. No. (*opens the Door.*) Oh, what is it you, Simon?

Enter SIMON.

Sim. At your service, sweet Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Why you knock with authority; and what are your commands, Master Simon?

Sim. I come, Madam, to receive those of your mistress. What, Jenny, has she any great affair on the anvil? Her summons is most exceedingly pressing; and you need not be told, Child, that a man of my consequence does not trouble himself about trifles.

B

Jen.

Jen. Oh, Sir, I know very well you principal actors don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, Ma'am, but notwithstanding your ironical sneer, it is not every man that will do for your mistress; her agents must have genius and parts: I don't suppose, in the whole Bills of Mortality, there is so general and extensive a dealer as my friend Mrs. Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be sure, we have plenty of customers; and for various kinds of commodities it would be pretty difficult I fancy to——

Sim. Commodities! Your humble servant, sweet Mrs. Jane; Yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr. Simon, I don't understand you; I suppose it is no secret in what sort of goods our dealing consists.

Sim. No, no, they are pretty well known.

Jen. And to be sure, though now and then, to oblige a customer, my mistress does condescend to smuggle a little——

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Yet there are no people in the Liberty of Westminster that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo.

Jen. The very best of quality are not ashamed to visit my mistress.

Sim. They have reason.

Jen. Respected by the neighbours.

Sim. I know it.

Jen. Punctual in her payments.

Sim. To a moment.

Jen. Regular hours.

Sim. Doubtless.

Jen. Never misses the farman on Sundays.

Sim. I

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Sim. I own it.

Jen. Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless, now and then, when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

Sim. Granted.

Jen. Not at all given to lying, but like other tradesfolks, in the way of her business.

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, Sir, what wou'd you insinuate? Look you, Mr. Simon, don't go to cast reflections upon us; don't think to blast the reputation of our——

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny, are you serious?

Jen. Serious! Ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are!

Jen. Upon my word, Mr. Simon, you shou'd not give your tongue such a licence; let me tell you, these airs don't become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why where the deuce have I got, sure I have mistaken the house; is not this Mrs. Mechlin's?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs. Mechlin, at the sign of the Star, in the parish of St. Paul's?

Jen. Bravo.

Sim. That commercial caterpillar?

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures?

Jen. Doubtless.

Sim. That walking warehouse?

Jen. Granted.

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

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Sim. That engrosser and seducer of virgins ?

Jen. Keep it up, master Simon.

Sim. That forestaller of Bagnios ?

Jen. Incomparable fine.

Sim. That canting, couzening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking—[*Loud knocking.*]

Jen. Mighty well, Sir : here comes my mistress, she shall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleased to draw.

Sim. Nay, but dear Jenny—

Jen. She shall be told how highly she stands in your favour.

Sim. But my sweet girl— [Knock again.]

Jen. Let me go, Mr. Simon, don't you hear ?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once !

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs. Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN, followed by a hackney coachman, with several bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her cloaths pinned up.

Mrs. Mech. So, huffy, what must I stay all day in the streets ? who have we here ! the devil's in the wenches, I think—one of your fellows I suppose—Oh, is it you ! how fares it, Simon ?

Jen. Madam, you should not have waited a minute, but Mr. Simon—

Sim. Hush, hush ! you barbarous jade—

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up stairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barr'd up the way.

Sim.

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Sim. Yes, and I am afraid I have put out my ankle. Thanks, Jenny ; you shall be no loser, you slut.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon.—Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken ! — Is the wench petrified ; why don't you reach me a chair, don't you see I'm tired to death ?

Jen. Indeed, ma'am, you'll kill yourself.

Sim. Upon my word, ma'am Mechlin, you shou'd take a little care of yourself ; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing : only victuals and cloaths, more cost than worship.—Why does not the wench take the things from the fellow ? Well, what's your fare ?

Coachm. Mistress, it's honestly worth half a crown.

Mrs. Mech. Give him a couple of shillings and send him away.

Coachm. I hope you'll tip me the tester to drink ?

Mrs. Mech. Them there fellows are never contented ; drink ! stand farther off ; why you smell already as strong as a beer-barrel.

Coachm. Mistress, that's because I have already been drinking.

Mrs. Mech. And are not you ashamed, you sot, to be eternally guzzling ? You had better buy you some cloaths.

Coachm. No, mistress, my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs. Mech. Your honour ! and pray how does that hinder you ?

Coachm.

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Coachm. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you, cries, Here coachman, here's something to drink.—

Mrs. Mech. Well !

Coachm. Wou'd it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing else? No, mistress, my conscience won't let me, because why, it's the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs. Mech. Did you ever hear such a block-head ?

Coachm. No, no, mistress ; tho' I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour ; my cattle, tho' I love 'em, poor beastesses, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs. Mech. Yes, you and your horses give pretty strong proofs of your love and your honour ; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no flesh. Well, Jenny, give him the six-pence ; there there, lay it out as you will.

Coachm. It will be to your health, mistress ; it shall melt at the Meuse, before I go home ; I shall be careful to clear my conscience.

Mrs. Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coachm. You need not. Mistress, your servant. [Exit Coachman.

Mrs. Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny ?

Jenny. The gentleman, ma'am, about the Gloucestershire living.

Mrs. Mech. He was, Oh oh ! what I suppose his stomach's come down. Does he like the incumbrance ? will he marry the party ?

Jen. Why that article seems to go a little against him ?

Mrs.

THE COMMISSARY. 7

Mrs. Mech. Does it so? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, ma'am, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs. Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?—

Jen. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Mech. So that the affair will be a secret to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs. Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is to my knowledge a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the custom-house.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and tell him, that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchase-money too of that same presentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, ma'am, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs. Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the eigarette, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl necklace; the lady

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lady goes to Mrs. Cornellys's to night ; and, if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

Sim. What a world of affairs ! it is a wonder, madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs. Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, master Simon.—But I have a great affair in hand—Such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim. If I, ma'am, can be of the least use—

Mrs. Mech. Of the highest ! there is no doing without you.—You know the great—

Enter JENNY.

Jen. I have put the things where you ordered, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Very well, you may go.

[Exit Jenny.]

I say, you know the great commissary, that is come to lodge in my house. Now they say this Mr. Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor ; heaven knows how he came by it : but that you know is no business of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant, abroad. *[Loud knocking.]*

Who the deuce can that be ? But let it be who it will, you must not go till I speak to you.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. The widow Loveit, ma'am,

Mrs. Mech. What, the old liquorish dowager from Devonshire Square ? shew her in. *[Exit Jenny.]* You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon, I shall soon dispatch her affair. *[Exit Simon.]*

Enter Mrs. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, good morning to you, good
Mrs.

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Mrs. Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs. Mech. You had better sit here, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—Ugh, ugh, ugh,—[coughs.] Consider I have no time to loose, and you are always so full of employment.

Mrs. Mech. Forgot you! you shall judge, Mrs. Loveit. I have, ma'am, provided a whole cargo of husbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and sizes: so you see you have nothing to do but choose.

Mrs. Lov. To choose! Mrs. Mechlin; Lord help me, what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! My poor dear man that's gone, I shall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs. Mech. 'Pshaw! madam, don't let us trouble our heads about him, it's high time that he was forgot.

Mrs. Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick.

Mrs. Mech. Nor a jot; the greatest compliment you cou'd pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reason to be fond of the state. But what do you mean by quick! Why he has been bury'd these three weeks—

Mrs. Lov. And three days, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed! quite an age!

Mrs. Lov. Yes; but I shall never forget him; sleeping, or waking, he's always before me. His dear swell'd belly, and his poor shrunk legs, Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

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Mrs. Mech. No!

Mrs. Lov. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a purple nose, and his little weezen face as sharp as a razor—don't mention it, I can never forget him. [*Cries.*]

Mrs. Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance, indeed. But, ma'am, if you continue to be so fond of your last husband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs. Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? a poor lone widow woman as I am; there's no body minds me; my tenants behind-hand, my servants all careless, my children undutiful—Ugh, ugh, ugh—[*coughs.*]

Mrs. Mech. You have a villainous cough, Mrs. Loveit; shall I send for some lozenges?

Mrs. Lov. No, I thank you, it's nothing at all; mere habit, just a little trick I've got.

Mrs. Mech. But I wonder you shou'd have all these vexations to plague you, madam, you, who are so rich, and so—

Mrs. Lov. Forty thousand in the Four per Cents. every morning I rise, Mrs. Mechlin, besides two houses at Hackney; but then my affairs are so weighty and intricate; there is such tricking in lawyers, and such torments in children, that I can't do by myself; I must have a helpmate; quite necessity, no matter of choice.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I understand you, you marry merely for convenience; just only to get an assistant, a kind of a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs. Lov. Nothing else.

Mrs. Mech. I thought so; quite prudential; so that age is none of your object; you don't want a scampering, giddy, sprightly, young—

Mrs.

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Mrs. Lov. Young! Heaven forbid. What, do you think, like some ladies I know, that I want to have my husband taken for one of my grand-children; No, no; thank Heaven, such vain thoughts never enter'd my head.

Mrs. Mech. But yet, as your matters stand, he ought not to be so very old neither; for instance now, of what use to you wou'd be a husband of sixty?

Mrs. Lov. Sixty! Are you mad, Mrs. Mechlin, what do you think I want to turn nurse?

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty-five?

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh, ugh——

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty?

Mrs. Lov. Oh! that's too cunning an age; men, now-adays, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs. Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or——

Mrs. Lov. Shall I, Mrs. Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs. Mech. I believe, ma'am, that will be your best way.

Mrs. Lov. Why then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to secure and preserve their obedience, will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. Why I thought you declar'd against youth?

Mrs. Lov. So I do, so I do; but then, six or seven and twenty is not so very young, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age; for at that time of life, men can baffle and stir, they are not easily check'd, and whatever they take in hand they go through with.

Mrs. Lov. True, true.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be said to be useful; it is the only tear and wear season.

Mrs. Lov. Right, right.

Mrs. Mech. Well, ma'am, I see what you want, and to-morrow about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs. Lov. I shan't fail.

Mrs. Mech. I think I can suit you.

Mrs. Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs. Mech. You may depend upon't, I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs. Lov. But, Mrs. Mechlin, be sure don't let him be older than that, not above seven or eight and twenty at most; and let it be as soon as you conveniently can.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. Because you know, the more children I have by the second venter, the greater plague I shall prove to those I had by the first.

Mrs. Mech. True, ma'am. You had better lean on me to the door; but, indeed, Mrs. Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs. Mech. Ah, they deserve it; you can't think what sad whelps they turn out; no punishment can be too much; if their poor father cou'd but have foreseen they wou'd have—— why did I mention the dear man! it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him.—— To-morrow about this time, Mrs. Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs. Mech. I can't say.

Mrs. Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mech. Here, John, take care of your mistress. [Exit *Mrs. Loveit*.

A good morning to you, ma'am. Jenny, bid Simon come up.—A husband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clause to the act to prevent the old from marrying clandestinely as well as the young. I am sure there are as many unsuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter SIMON.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr. Fungus's servants below?

Sim. Three or four strange faces.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, some of that troop, I suppose; come, Simon, be seated.—Well, Simon, as I was telling you; this Mr. Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart load of money, and who, (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts——

Sim. I formerly knew him, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs. Mech. I am glad of that—this spark, I say, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determin'd to rival them too in every other accomplishment.

Sim. Will that be so easy? why he must be upwards of—

Mrs. Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to set up for a gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. But fine talents you know, and a strong inclination.—

Sim.

Sim. That, indeed.—

Mrs. Mech. Then I promise you he spares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent?

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning something or other from morning to night; my house is a perfect academy, such a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, musicians—but, however, to sweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs. Mech. But one of his studies is really diverting, I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs. Mech. Oratory.—You must know his first ambition is to have a seat in a certain assembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr. What d'ye Call'em, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon speaking, and there is such haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll see enough on't yourself; for do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, madam!

Mrs. Mech. Ay, his privy counsellor, his confidant, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that answer?

Mrs. Mech. There I am coming—You are to know, that our 'Squire Wou'd-be is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing forsooth will go down but a person of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter contempt, a grand alliance is all that he wants; so that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two-pence how low and empty her purse is.

Sim. But, ma'am, won't it be difficult to meet with a suitable subject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed I

Mrs. Mech. You know my niece Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs. Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of Miss Dolly, for what?

Mrs. Mech. For what? you are plaguily dull; why, a woman of fashion, you dunce.

Sim. To be sure Miss Dolly is very deserving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bless me, Madam, here people of rank are so generally known, that the slightest enquiry wou'd poison your project.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter; there I think, I am pretty secure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the case.—

Mrs. Mech. In the first place, Mr. Fungus has an intire reliance on me.

Sim. That's something.

Mrs. Mech. Then to baffle any idle curiosity, we are not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upstart nobility to your Harry's and Edwards. No, no, we are scions from an older stock; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal descendant from Hercules Alexander, earl of Glendowery, prime minister to king Malcolm the First.

Sim.

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Sim. Odsso! a qualification for a canon of Straßbourg. So then it seems you are transplanted from the Banks of the Tweed; Cry you mercy! But how will Miss Dolly be able to manage the accent!

Mrs. Mech. Very well; she was two years an actress in Edenborough.

Sim. That's true; is the overture made, has there been any interview?

Mrs. Mech. Several; we have no dislike to his person; can't but own he is rather agreeable; and as to his proposals, they are greater than we cou'd desire; but we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs. Mech. Not so easily; and now comes your part: but first, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worse! The ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, them peering rascals took from me in Suffex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon! why then I am afraid there's an end of your traffick.

Sim. Totally: for now those fellows have got the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Then you are intirely at leisure?

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs. Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family servant in waiting here on the lady; but dispatch'd to the North with a view to negotiate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble Peer's resolution. Prepare you a suitable equipage, I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady——

Sim.

Sim. The contents. —

Mrs. Mech. Oh, you may read them within : now with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers ; but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily play'd.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Miss Dolly, Ma'am, in a hackney coach at the corner ; may she come in ?

Mrs. Mech. Are the servants out of the way ?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs. Mech. Be sure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, Ma'am. [*Exit Jenny.*]

Mrs. Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the furthestmost cushion in the window, run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions ?

Mrs. Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way ; for it is me that must introduce you above. [*Exit Simon.*] So, things seem now in a pretty good train ; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me easy for life. To say truth, I begin to be tir'd of my trade. To be sure the profits are great ; but then, so are the risks that I run : besides, my private practice begins to be smok'd. Ladies are suppos'd to come here with different designs than merely to look at my goods : some of my best customers too, are got out of my channel, and manage
D their

their matters at home by their maids. Those asylums, they gave a dreadful blow to my business. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could supply him with choice in an hour; but the market is spoiled, and a body might as soon produce a hare or a partridge as a pretty———[*Enter Dolly.*]——So Niece, are all things prepar'd; have you got the papers from Harpy?

Dolly. Here they are, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Let me see—Oh the marriage articles for Fungus to sign. Have you got the contract about you?

Dolly. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs. Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I——Here it is; this, Dolly, you must sign and seal before witness.

Dolly. To what end, aunt?

Mrs. Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your husband, that he may reimburse your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dolly. I hope my aunt does not suspect that I can ever be wanting——

Mrs. Mech. No, my dear, not in the least: but it is best, Dolly, in order to prevent all retrospection, that we settle accounts before you change your condition.

Dolly. But, ma'am, may not I see the contents?

Mrs. Mech. The contents, love, of what use will that be to you? Sign and seal, that's enough.

Dolly. But, aunt, I choose to see what I sign.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mech. To see, what then you suspect me?

Dolly. No, ma'am; but a little caution——

Mrs. Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! how dare you dispute my commands; have not I made you, raised you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dolly. Madam, I——

Mrs. Mech. Answer me, hussy, was not you a beggar's brat at my door; did not I, out of compassion, take you into my house, call you my niece, and give you suitable breeding?

Dolly. True, madam.

Mrs. Mech. And what return did you make me? You was scarce got into your teens, you forward slut, but you brought me a child almost as big as yourself; and a delightful father you chose for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre musician; that sick monkey-face maker of crotchets; that eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tail'd girls of the town. Oh, you low slut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vex'd me; but a fidler!

Dolly. For heaven's sake.——

Mrs. Mech. After that you elop'd, commenc'd stroller, and in a couple of years, return'd to town in your original trim, with scarce a rag to your back.

Dolly. Pray, ma'am——

Mrs. Mech. Did not I, notwithstanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good? found you a husband as rich as a Jew, just brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuse to sign a paltry paper?

Dolly. Pray, madam, give it me, I will sign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs. Mech. You will ; yes, so you had best. And what's become of the child, have you done as I order'd ?

Dolly. The doctor was not at home ; but the nurse left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs. Mech. You heard nothing from him ?

Dolly. Not a word.

Mrs. Mech. Then he is meditating some mischief, I warrant. However, let our good stars secure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky tho', that Mr. Fungus has chosen the doctor for his master of music ; but as yet he has not been here, and, if possible, we must prevent him.

Enter JENNY, hastily.

Jen. Mr. Fungus, the tallow chandler, ma'am, is crossing the way, shall I say you are at home ?

Mrs. Mech. His brother has servants enough, let some of them answer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exit Dolly and Jenny.*]—[*One knock at the door.*] Ay, that's the true tap of the trader ; this old brother of ours tho' is smoaky and shrewd, and tho' an odd, a sensible fellow ; we must guard against him : if he gets but an inkling, but the slightest suspicion, our project is marr'd.—[*A noise without.*] What the deuce is the matter ! As I live, a squabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hir'd this morning. This may make mirth, I'll listen a little.

[*Retires.*]

Enter

Enter Mr. ISAAC FUNGUS, driving in LA FLEUR.

I. Fung. What, is there no body in the house that can give me an answer; where's my brother, you rascal?

La Fleur. Je n'entend pas.

I. Fung. Pas, what the devil is that; answer yes or no, is my brother at home? don't shrug up your shoulders at me, you——Oh, here comes a rational being.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it? this here lantern-jaw'd rascal won't give me an answer, and indeed wou'd scarce let me into the house.

La Fleur. C'est gros Bourgeois a fait une tapage de diable.

Mrs. Mech. Ey donc c'est le frere de monsieur.

La Fleur. Le frere! Mon Dieu!

I. Fung. What is all this? what the devil linguo is the fellow a-talking?

Mrs. Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fung. From France! and is that the best of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and insult us at home. People make such a rout about smuggling their frenchified goods, their men do us more mischief. If we could but hinder the importing of them——

Mrs. Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton, I see that, Mr. Isaac.

I. Fung.

I. Fung. I warrant me : is brother Zachary at home ?

Mrs. Mech. Above stairs, Sir.

I. Fung. Any company with him ?

Mrs. Mech. Not any to hinder your visit. La Fleur, ouvrez le porte.

I. Fung. Get along you——Mrs. Mechlin, your servant.——I can't think what the devil makes your quality so fond of the monsieurs ; for my part I don't see——March and be hang'd to you—you footy-fac'd——

[*Exeunt I. Fungus, and La Fleur.*]

Mrs. Mech. Come Dolly, you now may appear.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Mr. Paduasoy, ma'am, the Spital-fields weaver ; he has been waiting this hour, and says he has some people at home——

Mrs. Mech. Let him enter ; in a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly. [*Exit Jenny.*]

Enter PADUASOY.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduasoy, you may load yourself home with those silks, they won't do for my market.

Mr. Pad. Why, what's the matter, Madam ?

Mrs. Mech. Matter ! you are a pretty fellow indeed ; you a tradesman ! but it's lucky I know you, things might have been worse ; let us settle accounts, Mr. Paduasoy ; you'll see no more of my money.

Mr. Pad. I shall be sorry for that, Mrs. Mechlin.

I

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mech. Sorry ! answer me one question ; am not I the best customer that ever you had ?

Pad. I confess it.

Mrs. Mech. Have not I mortgaged my precious soul, by swearing to my quality-customers that the stuff from your looms was the produce of Lyons ?

Pad. Granted.

Mrs. Mech. And unless that had been believ'd, could you have sold them a yard, nay a nail ?

Pad. I believe not.

Mrs. Mech. Very well. Did not, Sir, I procure you more money for your curs'd goods, when sold as the manufacture of France, than as mere English they could have ever produced you ?

Pad. I never deny'd it.

Mrs. Mech. Then are not you a pretty fellow, to blow up and ruin my reputation at once ?

Pad. Me, Madam !

Mrs. Mech. Yes, you.

Pad. As how ?

Mrs. Mech. Did not you tell me these pieces of silk were entire, and the only ones you had made of that pattern ?

Pad. I did.

Mrs. Mech. Now mind. Last Monday I left them as just landed, upon a pretence to secure them from seizure, at the old countess of Furbelow's, by whose means, I was sure, at my own price, to get rid of them both ; and who should come in last night at the ball at the Mansion-House, where my lady unluckily happen'd to be, with a full suit of the blue pattern upon her back, but Mrs. Deputy Dowlafs, dizen'd out like a duchess.

Pad.

Pad. Mrs. Deputy Dowlaſs ! Is it poſſible ?

Mrs. Mech. There is no denying the fact : but that was not all ; if indeed Mrs. Deputy had behaved like a gentlewoman, and ſwore they had been ſent her from Paris, why there the thing would have died : but ſee what it is to have to do with mechanicks, the fool owned ſhe had them from you. I ſhould be glad to ſee any of my customers at a loſs for a lye. But thoſe trumpery traders, Mr. Paduaſoy, you'll never gain any credit by them.

Pad. This muſt be a trick of my wife's ; I know the women are intimate, but this piece of intelligence will make a hot houſe. None of my fault indeed, Mrs. Mechlin ; I hope, ma'am, this won't make any difference ?

Mrs. Mech. Difference ! I don't believe I ſhall be able to ſmuggle a gown for you theſe fix months. What is in that bundle ?

Pad. Some India handkerchiefs, that you promis'd to procure of a ſupercargo at Woolwich, for Sir Thomas Callico's lady.

Mrs. Mech. Are you pretty forward with the light ſprigg'd waſtcoats from Italy ?

Pad. They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs. Mech. You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of the autumn ; but you may make me immediately a freſh ſortment of foreign ribbons for ſummer.

Pad. Any other commands, Mrs. Mechlin ?

Mrs. Mech. Not at preſent, I think.

Pad. I wiſh you, madam, a very good morning.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduaſoy, Lord ! I had lik'd to have forgot. You muſt write an anonymous letter

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etter to the Custom-house, and send me some old silks to be seized; I must treat the town with a bonfire: it will make a fine paragraph for the papers; and at the same time advertise the public where such things may be had.

Pad. I shan't fail, madam. [*Exit Paduasoy.*]

Mrs. Mech. Who says now that I am not a friend to my country! I think the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, should vote me a premium. I am sure I am one of the greatest encouragers of our own manufactures.

[*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

E

ACT

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A C T II.

SCENE First Continues.

Enter COMMISSARY FUNGUS, ISAAC FUNGUS,
and Mrs. MECHLIN.

Zac. Fungus.

BROTHER Isaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But first answer me this; can knowledge do a man any harm?

I. Fun. No, farting; what is befitting a map for to learn.

Z. Fun. To learn! and how should you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn! Stick to your trade, master tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you say in your conscience, as how, it is descent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almost lost the use of your legs?

Z. Fun. Lost the use of my legs! to see but the malice of men! Do but ax Mrs. Mechlin; now, ma'am, does not Mrs. Dukes say, that, considering my time, I have made a wonderful progress?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac!

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Isaac. Why, I ha'nt been at it passing a couple of months, and we have at our school too aldermen and a
fer-

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serjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs. Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. There now, Mrs. Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, ma'am, does not master allow, that of my age, I am the most hopeful scholar he has?

Mrs. Mech. I can't but say, Mr. Isaac, that the 'squire has made a most prodigious improvement.

Z. Fun. Do you hear that? I wish we had but a kit, I would show you what I could do: one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha. There are risings and sinkings.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fun. A'n't it! Why, before next winter is over, he says, he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent, you may see me amble at a Ridotto with an opera singer.

Mrs. Mech. And I warrant he acquits himself as well as the best.

I. Fun. Mercy on me; and pray brother, that thing like a sword in your hand, what may the use of that implement be?

Z. Fun. This! oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil.

Z. Fun. Ay, a little instrument, by which, we who are gentlemen, are instructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill! Marry, heaven forbid; I hope you have no such bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac. you was used to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law, but now I am another guess person; I have been in camps,

cantons, and intrenchments: have marched over bridges and breaches; I have seen the Ezel and Wezell; I'm got as rich as a Jew, and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a Jew! Ah, Zac. Zac. but if you had not had another guess trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether so rich: but now you have got all this wealth, why not sit down and enjoy it in quiet?

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac, do you purtend to know life? are you acquainted with the Beaux d'Esprits of the age?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; then how should you know what belongs to gentility?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zac. I hope I am every whit as well born?

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the breeding is all; consider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business; hey, Mrs. Mechlin?

Mrs. Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. And as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, in what the art of fencing consists?

I. Fun. How shou'd I?

Z. Fun. Why it is short; there are but two rules; the first is, to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can; the second, to be careful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how this is to be done?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough: for do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line of your body, it is impossible he ever should

should hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way, or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil. Mrs. Mechlin, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac.—[*Offers him a foil.*]

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These bourgeois are so frightful. Mrs. Mechlin, will you, ma'am, do me the favour to push at me a little? Mind, brother, when she thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed.—But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentleman is. Now I have been told, do see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has in public company call'd me a cuckold—

I. Fun. A cuckold? But how can that be? because why, brother Zac. you be'nt married.

Z. Fun. But as I am just going to be marry'd, that may very well happen you know.

Mrs. Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has said, I am a cuckold. Upon which, the first time I set eyes on captain Wilkins, either at Vaux-hall, or at Ranelagh, I accost him, in a courteous, genteel-like manner.

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Isaac—in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; captain Hopkins, your servant.

I. Fun. Why, you call'd him but now Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fun.

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Z. Fun. P'shaw! You blockhead, I tell you the name does not signify nothing—Your servant; shall I crave your ear for a moment? The captain politely replies, Your commands, good Mr. Fungus? then we walk side by side—Come here, Mrs. Mechlin.—[*They walk up and down*] for some time as civil as can be. Mind brother Isaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey!—no, t'other side, Mrs. Mechlin.—that's right—I hear, captain Wilkins—

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Isaac, be quiet—Wilkins, that you have taken some liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't understand—

I. Fun. Don't swear, brother Zachary.

Z. F. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow!

I. Fun. But you are grown such a reprobate since you went to the wars—

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, stop the tongue of that blockhead; why, duncce, I am speaking by rule, and Mrs. Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always.

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't understand. Liberties with you, cries the captain, where, when, and in what manner? Last Friday night, in company at the St. Alban's, you call'd me a buck, and moreover said, that my horns were exalted. Now, Sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, Sir, is what I never deny

deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr. Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How Sir, do you deny my gentility! Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—Draw Sir. Now push, Mrs. Mechlin. [*They fence.*] There I parry tierce, there I parry carte, there I parry—Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs. Mechlin.

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well push'd, Mrs. Mechlin.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she pushed me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts, that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinc'd of your skill; but I think, brother Zac. you hinted an intention of marrying, is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray is it a secret to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret, no, I am proud of the match; she brings me all that I want, her veins full of good blood; such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! ay, such a name, lord, we have nothing like it in London: none of your stunted little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trotts; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad

broad wheels. Mrs. Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs. Mech. Lady Sacharissa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you. Lineally descended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, Earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the first.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I can't say quite all; for the right honourable peer that is to be my pappa, (who by the bye) is as proud as the devil, has flatly renounc'd the alliance, calls me here in his letter Plebeian, and says if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pye balls.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman, who (between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my person has prov'd too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. It is resolv'd?

Z. Fun. Fix'd.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so? come, come, brother Isaac, don't be uneasy, I have a shrewd guess at your grievance; but though you may not be suffer'd to see lady Scracarissa at first, yet who knows before long I may have interest enough with her to bring it about; and in the mean time you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it?

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is: why, but yesterday, says her ladyship to me, Though, Mrs. Mechlin, it can't be suppos'd that I shou'd admit any of the Fungus family into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure; not at first, as I said.

Mrs. Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac, there's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable; but people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious; but here, brother Zac. you mistake me, it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live together a month?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own house like a paltry dependant?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourself and your orders contemn'd by your servants?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To see your property devour'd by your lady's beggarly cousins, who, notwithstanding, won't vouchsafe you a nod?——

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her sending, come at her calling, dine by your-

f

self

self when she has bettermost company, and sleep six nights a week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to disobey, have the impudence to dispute the sovereign will and pleasure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you wou'd be at; you don't mean I shou'd marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I shou'd with pleasure see you equally match'd, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You wou'd? I don't doubt it, but that is a pleasure you never will have. Look you, Isaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have; and if you say any more, I'll not be contented with that, for dammee, I'll marry a duchess.

Enter LA FLEUR.

La Fleur. Le Maître pour donner d'Eloquence.

Z. Fun. What does the puppy say, Mrs. Mechlin, for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs. Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a speaker.

Z. Fun.

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Z. Fun. Odzooks ! a special fine fellow, let's have him.

Mrs. Mech. Faites le entres. [*Exit LA FLEUR.*]

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another——

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the finest fellow of all, it is he that is to make me a man ; and hark ye, brother, if I should chance to rise in the state, no more words, your business is done.

I. Fun. What, I reckon some member of parliament.

Z. Fun. A member ; Lord help you, brother Isaac, this man is a whole senate himself. Why it is the famous orationer that has publish'd the book.

I. Fun. What, Mr. Gruel.

Z. Fun. The same.

I. Fun. Yes, I have seen his name in the News.

Z. Fun. His knowledge is wonderful ; he has told me such secrets : Why do you know, Isaac, by what means 'tis we speak ?

I. Fun. Speak ! why we speak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No !

Z. Fun. No. He says we speak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat ; and without them we only should bellow.

I. Fun. But surely the mouth——

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing, only just a cavity for the air to pass through.

I. Fun. Indeed !

Z. Fun. That's all ; and when the cavity's
F 2 small,

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small, little sounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed; observe now in whistling and bawling.—[*whistles and bawls.*]—Do you see. Oh, he is a miraculous man.

I. Fun. But of what use is all this?

Z. Fun. But it's knowledge, an't it; and of what signification is that, you fool! and then as to use, why he can make me speak in any manner he pleases; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the subject requires.—But here he is.

Enter Mr. GRUEL.

Mr. Gruel, your servant; I have been holding forth in your praise.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr. Fungus, but to your declamation, or recitation, (as Quintilian more properly terms it) I shall be indebted for much future praise, in as much as the reputation of the scholar does (as I may say) confer, or rather as it were reflect, a marvellous kind of lustre on the fame of the master himself.

Z. Fun. There, Isaac! didst ever hear the like? he talks just as if it were all out of a book; what wou'd you give to be able to utter such words?

I. Fun. And what shou'd I do with them? them holiday terms wou'd not pass in my shop; there's no buying and selling with them.

Gruel. Your observation is pithy and pertinent; different stations different idioms demand, polished periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baser kind of coin, for the ease and con-

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convenience of inferior traffic, so it is indulg'd with a vernacular or vicious vulgar phraseology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce; but I doubt, Sir, I soar above the region of your comprehension?

I. Fun. Why if you wou'd come down a step or two, I can't say but I shou'd understand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to shine at a vestry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can supply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no such desire.

Gruel. Not to lose time; your brother here, (for such I find the gentleman is) in other respects a common man like yourself——

Z. Fun. No better.

Gruel. Observe how alter'd by means of my art: are you prepar'd in the speech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel. Let your gesticulations be chaste, and your muscular movements consistent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——[*Enter JENNY, and whispers Mrs. MECHLIN.*]

Mrs. Mechlin, you'll stay?

Mrs. Mech. A little business, I'll return in an instant. [Exit Mrs. MECHLIN.]

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you please, Sir, there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face; one, two, three; now off you go.

Z. Fun. When I consider the vast importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various

ous vicissitudes that this soil has sustain'd ; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were ; and what we, their civilized successors, are ; when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and chesnuts——

Gruel. Pignuts, good Sir, if you please.

Z. Fun. You are right ; crab-apples and pignuts ; and that we feast on green-peas, and on custards : when I trace in the recording historical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now know we have fish by land-carriage, I am lost in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail commerce ! daughter of industry, consort to credit, parent of opulence, full sister to liberty, and great grandmother to the art of navigation——

I. Fun. Why this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fun. Prithee Isaac be quiet—art of navigation—a—a—'vigation.—Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not ; this day's performance has largely fulfill'd your yesterday's promise.

Z. Fun. But I han't half done, the best is to come ; let me just give him that part about turnpegs—for the sloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impassable bogs, that the languid, but generous, steed travelled through ; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turnpegs.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Your riding-master is below.

Z. Fun. Gadso ! then here we must end.
You'll

You'll pardon me, good Mr. Gruel; for as I want to be a finished gentleman as soon as I can, it is impossible for me to stick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, Though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the multiplicity of your avocations do, (as I may say) in some measure, cicatrize the otherwise mortal wound on this occasion sustained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatrize! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man. Well, Mr. Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your slightest volition.

Z. Fun. I wish, brother Isaac, I could have staid, you should have heard me oration way like a lawyer, about pleadings and presidents, but all in good time.— [Exit FUNGUS.

Mrs. Mech. This gentleman, Sir, will gain you vast credit.

Gruel. Yes, ma'am, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confess, are enormous; and as to you I am indebted for this promising pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an instantaneous and gratis lecture on that species of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Sir, I have no sort of occasion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man, (for such I define him to be) a male or masculine manner belongs—

Mrs. Mech. Any other time, good Mr. Gruel.

Gruel. So to that biped, woman, she participating of his general nature, the word homo, in Latin,

Latin, being promiscuously used as woman or man—

Mrs. Mech. For Heaven's sake—

Gruel. But being cast in a more tender and delicate mold—

Mrs. Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The soft, supple, insinuating graces—

Mrs. Mech. I must insist—

Gruel. Do appertain, (as I may say) in a more peculiar, or particular, manner;—

Mrs. Mech. Nay; then—

Gruel. Her rank, in the order of entities.—

Mrs. Mech. I must thrust you out of my house.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

Mrs. Mech. Was there ever such a—*[pushing him out.]*

Re-enter GRUEL.

Gruel. To those eminent, hazardous, and, (as I may say) perilous conflicts, which so often—

Mrs. Mech. Get down stairs, and be hang'd to you. *[Pushes him out.]* There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom; I hope, I han't done him a mischief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr. Gruel?—No, all's safe; I hear him going on with his speech; an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent, indeed, I wonder all those people don't turn your head, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I am pretty well us'd to 'em. But who comes here! Mr. Isaac, if you will step into the next room, I have something to communicate that well deserves your attention.

[Exit ISAAC FUNGUS.]

Enter

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Enter SIMON.

Sim. Doctor Catgut at the foot of the stairs.

Mrs. Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilst he is here. [*Exit SIMON.*] I hope he has not heard of the pretty present we sent him to day.

Enter Dr. CATGUT.

Dr. Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, ma'am, received a couple of compliments from your mansion this morning; one I find from a lodger of your's, the other I presume from your niece; but for the last, I rather suppose I am indebted to you.

Mrs. Mech. Me! indeed, Doctor, you are widely mistaken; I assure you, Sir, since your business broke out, I have never set eyes of her once.

Dr. Cat. Then I am falsely informed.

Mrs. Mech. But after all you must own it is but what you deserve; I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off these tricks.

Dr. Cat. Why what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? my constitution requires it.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed, I should not have thought it.

Dr. Cat. Then the dear little devils are so desperately fond.

Mrs. Mech. Without doubt.

Dr. Cat. And for frolick, flirtation, diligence, dress and address——

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

G

Dr.

Dr. Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry few men, I flatter myself, will be found that can match me.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr. Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin; let me perish, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed!

Dr. Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I should be positively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, but Doctor, consider I am not of a trifling age, it would be only losing your time.

Dr. Cat. Ha, so coy! But a propos, Molly, this lodger of your's; who is he, and what does he want?

Mrs. Mech. You have heard of the great Mr. Fungus?

Dr. Cat. Well!

Mrs. Mech. Being informed of your skill and abilities, he has sent for you to teach him to sing.

Dr. Cat. Me teach him to sing! What does the scoundrel mean to affront me?

Mrs. Mech. Affront you!

Dr. Cat. Why don't you know, Child, that I quitted that paltry profession?

Mrs. Mech. Not I.

Dr. Cat. Oh, intirely renounc'd it.

Mrs. Mech. Then what may you follow at present?

Dr. Cat. Me!—nothing. I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs. Mech. A poet!

Dr. Cat. A poet. The Muses; you know I was always fond of the ladies: I suppose you have
heard

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heard of Shakespeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton, and Hudibras?

Mrs. Mech. I have.

Dr. Cat. I shall blast all their laurels, by gad; I have just given the public a taste, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, you surprise me; but pray, is poetry a trade to be learn'd?

Dr. Cat. Doubtless. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs. Mech. And cou'd you communicate your art to another?

Dr. Cat. To be sure. Why I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhymes, from Z quite to great A. Let us see, A. ay, here it begins, A, afs, pass, grass, mass, lass, and so quite thro' the alphabet down to Z. Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs. Mech. And what do you do with those rhymes?

Dr. Cat. Oh, we supply them.

Mrs. Mech. Supply them?

Dr. Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will shew you. Last week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made these rhimes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the stocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that sort of writing.

First she.—*There to see the sluggish afs,
Through the meadows as we pass,
Eating up the farmer's grass,
Blyth and merry, by the mass,
As a lively country lass.*

Mrs. Mech. Very pretty.

Dr. Cat. A'n't it. Then he replies,

*Hear the farmer cry out, zounds !
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beast has broke my mounds ;
If the parish has no pounds,
Kill, and give him to the bounds.*

Then Da Capo, both join in repeating the last stanza; and this tack'd to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You observe?

Mrs. Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is desirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr. Cat. In that case, he may command me, my dear; and I promise you, in a couple of months, he shall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs. Mech. At present he is a little engaged, but as soon as the honey moon is over——

Dr. Cat. Honey-moon! Why is he going to be marry'd?

Mrs. Mech. This Evening, I fancy.

Dr. Cat. The finest opportunity for an introduction, in nature; I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin, of my own composition, such an epithalmium.

Mrs. Mech. Thalmium, what's that?

Dr. Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compose at the solemnization of weddings.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, ho!

Dr. Cat. It is set to musick already, for I still compose for myself.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mech. You do?

Dr. Cat. Yes. What think you now of providing a band, and serenading the 'Squire to night? It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs. Mech. The prettiest thought in the world. But I hear Mr. Fungus's bell. You'll excuse me, dear Doctor, you may suppose we are busy.

Dr. Cat. No apology then, I'll about it this instant.

Mrs. Mech. As soon as you please; any thing to get you out of the way. [*Aside and exit.*]

Dr. Cat. Your obsequious, good madam Mechlin. But notwithstanding all your fine speeches, I shrewdly suspect my blessed bargain at home was a present from you; and what shall I do with it?—These little embarrasses we men of intrigue are eternally subject to. There will be no sending it back. She will never let it enter the house.—Hey! gad, a lucky thought is come into my head—this serenade is finely contrived.—Madam Mechlin shall have her cousin again, for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double base-viol; so the Bawd shall have a concert as well as the 'Squire.—

[*Exit Dr. CATGUT.*]

END of the SECOND ACT,



A C T III.

SCENE Continues.

Enter HARPY, YOUNG LOVEIT, and JENNY.

Harpy.

TELL your mistress my name is Harpy; she knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr. Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?
[*Exit Jenny.*]

Har. The same. Ay, ay, young gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your business is done. You knew Kitty Williams, that marry'd Mr. Abednigo Potiphar, the Jew broker?

Y. Lov. I did.

Har. And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champanfy, from the isle of St. Kitt's?

Y. Lov. I have seen him.

Har. All owing to her. Her success in that branch of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

Y. Lov. Indeed! She must be very adroit.

Har.

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Har. Adroit ! You shall judge. I will tell you a case : you know the large brick house at Peckham, with a turret at top ?

Y. Lov. Well.

Har. There liv'd Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite the cheesemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turn'd of fourteen, and under the wing of an old maiden aunt, as watchful as a dragon—but hush—I hear Mrs. Mechlin, I'll take another season to finish my tale.

Y. Lov. But, Mr. Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to gossiping, I wou'd rather my real name was a secret till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossiping ! She, lord help you, she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

Y. Lov. That may be, but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well, as you please.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Your very humble servant, good madam Mechlin ; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs. Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr. Harpy ; won't you be seated, Sir.

Y. Lov. Ma'am. [*They sit down.*]

Mrs. Mech. And pray, Sir, how can I serve you ?

Har. Why, ma'am, the gentleman's situation is—but, Sir, you had better state your case to Mrs. Mechlin yourself.

Y. Lov.

Y. Lov. Why, you are to know, ma'am, that I am just escap'd from the University, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly esteem'd.

Mrs. Mech. Very obliging. I must own, Sir, I have had a very great respect for that learned body, ever since they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of music.

Y. Lov. Yes, ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. Do you know him, Sir? I expect him here every minute to instruct a lodger of mine.

Y. Lov. Not intimately. Just arriv'd, but last night; upon my coming to town I found my father deceas'd, and all his fortune devis'd to his relict, my mother.

Mrs. Mech. What, the whole!

Y. Lov. Every shilling. That is, for her life.

Mrs. Mech. And to what sum may it amount?

Y. Lov. Why, my mother is eternally telling me, that after her, I shall inherit fifty or sixty thousand at least.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, a capital sum.

Y. Lov. But of what use, my dear Mrs. Mechlin, since she refuses to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it, and while the grass grows— You know the proverb.—

Mrs. Mech. What, I suppose you want something for present subsistence.

Y. Lov. Just my situation.

Mrs. Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourself?

Y. Lov. I am resolv'd to be guided by you.

Mrs. Mech. What do you think of a wife?

Y. Lov. A wife!

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Mrs. Mech. Come, come, don't despise my advice; when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better resource than a usurer; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleasure in repairing the injuries done by fortune to handsome young fellows.

Har. Mrs. Mechlin has reason.

Y. Lov. But, dear ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs. Mech. Do! Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little stricken in years; make her your banker and steward. If you say but the word, before night I'll give you a widow with two thousand a year in her pocket.

Y. Lov. Two thousand a year! a pretty employment, if the residence cou'd but be dispens'd with.

Mrs. Mech. What do you mean by residence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tack'd to his wife's petticoat: when she is in town, be you in the country; as she shifts do you shift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and let me tell you, you won't find a more easy condition; twelve months subsistence for one month's labour!

Y. Lov. Two thousand a year, you are sure?

Mrs. Mech. The least penny.

Y. Lov. Well, madam, you shall dispose of me just as you please.

Mrs. Mech. Very well, if you will call in half an hour at farthest, I believe we shall finish the business.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

H

Mrs.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mech. Precisely. Oh, dispatch is the very life and soul of my trade. Mr. Harpy will tell you my terms, you will find them reasonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am sure we shall have no dispute about those.

Y. Lov. No, no.—[*Going.*]

Mrs. Mech. Oh, but Mr. Harpy, it may be proper to mention that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of sixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart; it is the purse, not the person I want! Sixty! she is quite a girl; I wish with all my soul she was ninety.

Mrs. Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I see that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, sweet Mrs. Mechlin, adieu.

[*Exeunt Young Loveit and Harpy.*]

Mrs. Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonshire-square, and now to cater for my commissary. Here he comes.

Enter FUNGUS and BRIDOUN.

Fun. So, in six weeks—Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs. Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conscious that in this step, she descends from her dignity; but being desirous to screen you from the fury of her noble relations, she is determined to let them see that the act and deed is intirely her own.

Fun. Very kind, very obliging indeed. But, Mrs. Mechlin, as the family is so furious, I reckon we shall never be reconcil'd.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought commissions for her three younger brothers, discharg'd the mortgage on the paternal estate, and portioned off eight or nine of her sisters, it is not impossible but my lord may be prevailed on to suffer your name—

Fun. Do you think so?

Mrs. Mech. But then a work of time, Mr. Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay, I know very well things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. But I must prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are sent to her ladyship?

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

Fun. And the ring for her ladyship, and her ladyship's licence?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyship's parson too; all are prepar'd.

Fun. Parson! why won't her ladyship please to be marry'd at Powl's?

Mrs. Mech. Lord, Mr. Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition would bear to be seen in public at once with a person like you?

Fun. That's true, I——

Mrs. Mech. No, no; I have sent to Dr. Tickletext, and the business will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyship pleases, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. You will get dress'd as soon as you can.

Fun. I shall only take a short lesson from Mr. Bridoun, and then wait her ladyship's pleasure. Mrs. Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being so is kept a secret from her.

Fun. Never fear.—[*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*] Well, Mr. Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little.—

Brid. A great deal.

Fun. And that in a month or six weeks I may be able to prance upon a long-tail'd horse in Hyde-park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vast pleasant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the King's-road, side by side, with the ladies, in the thick of the dust; but that I must not hope for this summer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it close.

Fun. Never fear, I shan't be sparing of— But come, come, let us get to our business— John, have the carpenters brought home my new horse?

Enter JOHN.

John. It is here, Sir, upon the top of the stairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an instant. [*Exit John.*] What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr. Bridoun, to the making a gentleman. And do your gentlemen born now (for I reckon you have had of all sorts) take as much pains as we do?

Brid.

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Brid. To be sure ; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is something in that ; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuter now in catching their larning,

Brid. Dispositions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay, something in nater, I warrant, as they say the children of blackamoors will swim as soon as they come into the world.

[*Enter Servants with a wooden horse.*
Oh, here he is, Ods me ! it is a stately fine beast.

Brid. Here my lads, place it here——very well, where's your switch, Mr. Fungus ?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now let me see you vault nimbly into your seat. Zounds ! you are got on the wrong side, Mr. Fungus ?

Fun. I am so, indeed, but we'll soon rectify that. Now we are right : may I have leave to lay hold of the mane ?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try ; but this steed is so devilish tall——Mr. Bridcun, you don't think he'll throw me ?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he shou'd he can't kick, that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now mind your position.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There.

Brid. And your shoulders fall easily back.

Fun. Ho——there.

I

Brid.

Brid. Your switch perpendicular in your right hand—Your right—that is it, your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fun. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at first.

Brid. Very well: preserve your position.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you easy?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr. Bridoun, I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay, I can't think but this here horse stands still very near as fast as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho, Stop the horse. Zounds! I'm out of the stirrups, I can't fit him no longer; there I go.——— [Falls off.

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fun. My left hip has a little confusion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident, it might happen to the very best rider in England.

Fun. Indeed!

Brid. We have such things happen every day at the manege; but you are vastly improv'd.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little; and, Mr. Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live horse?

Brid.

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Brid. The very instant you are able to keep your seat on a dead one.—

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Bless me, Mr. Fungus, how you are trifling your time! I expect lady Sacharissa every moment, and see what a trim you are in.

Fun. I beg pardon, good madam Mechlin. I'll be equipp'd in a couple of minutes; where will her ladyship please to receive?

Mrs. Mech. In this room, to be sure; come, stir, stir.

Fun. I have had a little fall from my horse.— I'll go as fast as I—Mr. Bridoun, will you lend me a lift? [*Exeunt Fungus and Bridoun.*]

Mrs. Mech. There — Jenny, show Mrs. Loveit in here — Who's there —

Enter SERVANTS.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haste. Madam, if you'll step in here for a moment.

Enter Mrs. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, Mrs. Mechlin; well, you see I am true to my time; and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs. Mech. Beyond expectations.

Mrs. Lov. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and such a party, you might search the town round before you cou'd meet with

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with his fellow : he'll suit you in every respect.

Mrs. Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman?

Mrs. Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding, none of your little whipper snapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a presence as portly ; he has one fault indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs. Lov. What is it?

Mrs. Mech. His age.

Mrs. Lov. Age ! how, how?

Mrs. Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid ; not above twenty at most.

Mrs. Lov. Well, well, so he answers in every thing else, we must overlook that ; for, Mrs. Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs. Mech. True, ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. And where is he?

Mrs. Mech. I look for him every minute ; if you will but step into the drawing-room, I have given him such a picture, that I am sure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs. Lov. My dear woman, you are so kind and obliging : but, Mrs. Mechlin, how do I look ? don't flatter me, do you think my figure will strike him ?

Mrs. Mech. Or he must be blind.

Mrs. Lov. You may just hint black don't become me, that I am a little paler of late ; the loss of a husband one loves will cause an alteration, you know.

Mrs. Mech. True ; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs. Lov. But things will come round in a trice.

[Exit Mrs. Loveit.

Enter

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Enter SIMON.

Sim. Madam, miss Dolly is dizen'd out, and every thing ready.

Mrs. Mech. Let her wait for the commissary here, I will introduce him the instant he is dress'd. [*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]

Sim. Miss Dolly, you may come in, your aunt will be here in an instant.

Enter DOLLY and JENNY.

Dolly. Hush, Simon, hush, to your post.

Sim. I am gone——— [*Exit Simon.*]

Dolly. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality air?

Jen. As perfectly, ma'am, as if you had been bred to the business; and for figure, I defy the first of them all. For my part, I think Mr. Fungus very well off; when the secret comes out I don't see what right he has to be angry.

Dolly. Oh, when once he is noos'd, let him struggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may trust to your management. I hope, miss, I shall have the honour to follow your fortunes; there will be no bearing this house, when once you have left it.

Dolly. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of so useful a second; besides, for mistress and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed! but here comes Mr. Fungus; remember distance and dignity.

I

Dolly.

Dolly. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I see what I have to hope. Our young filly seems to be secure of her match; but I may jostle her the wrong side the post: we will have a trial, however, but I must see and find out the brother.

Enter Z. FUNGUS, and Mrs. MECHLIN.

Fun. Yes, Scarlet is vastly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies; quite proper too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs. Mech. Stay where you are till you are announc'd to the lady. Mr. Fungus begs leave to throw himself at your ladyship's feet.

Dolly. The mon may dra nigh.

Mrs. Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs. Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love?

Mrs. Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now stand my friend, Mr. Gruel. But she has such a deal of dignity that she dashes me quite.

Mrs. Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me in case I shou'd stumble—Madam, or, May it please your ladyship, When I preponderate the grandeur of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanness of my dingy descent; when I consider that your ancestors, like admiral Anson, sail'd all round the world in the ark; and that it is a matter of doubt, whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts

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thoughts of my towering ambition—Ah—a, is not Phaeton next?—

Mrs. Mech. Hey!—[*Looking at the paper.*]
No, Luna.

Fung. Right;—ambition—dignity how debas'd, distance how great; it is as if the link shou'd demand an alliance with Luna; or the bushy-bramble court the boughs of the stately Scotch fir; it is as if—What's next?

Mrs. Mech. Next—hey!—I have lost the place I am afraid—Come, come, enough has been said; you have shew'd the sense you entertain of the honour. Upon these occasions, a third person is fittest to cut matters short. Your ladyship hears that—

Dolly. Yes, yes, I keen weel enough what the mon wou'd be at. Mrs. Mechlin has spear'd sike things in your great commendations, Mr. Fungus, that I cannot but say I clik'd a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fung. Much oblig'd to Mrs. Mechlin, indeed, please your la'ship.—

Dolly. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North Briton can boast.

Fung. I know it full well, please your la'ship.

Dolly. And that I shall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match.

Fung. I am sorry for that, please your la'ship.

Dolly. But after the ceremony it will be proper to withdraw from town for a short space o'time.

Fun. Please your la'ship, what your la'ship pleases.

Dolly. In order to gi that gossip, Scandal, just time to tire her tongue.

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Fun. True, your la'ship.

Dolly. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in choosin' sike a consort as you.

Fun. And with me too, please your la'ship.

Dolly. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs. Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dolly. Donna you think the honor will dra' mickle envy upon you.

Fun. Oh, to be sure, please your la'ship. I did not mean that.

Dolly. Weel, I say we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As soon as your la'ship pleases; I have a sweet house hard by Reading.

Dolly. You ha'; that's right.

Fun. One of the most pleasantest places that can be again.

Dolly. Ha' you a good prospect?

Fun. Twenty stage-coaches drive every day by the door, besides carts and gentlemen's carriages.

Dolly. Ah, that will——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, your ladyship will find all things prepar'd: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your la'ship's hand——

Dolly. Maister Fungus, you're a little too hasty. [Exit Dolly.]

Mrs. Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you must not expect to be too familiar at first.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we shall bring the bedding about?

Mrs. Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter sets in.

Fun. Not before!

Enter

Enter Young LOVEIT, hastily.

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr. Harpy wou'd call.

Mrs. Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr. Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the same hands after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome: What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a cit; but monstrously rich; but your lady will wonder——

Fun. Ay, ay, but you'll follow; for I shan't know what to say to her when we are alone.—

[*Exit Fungus.*]

Mrs. Mech. I will send you, Sir, your spouse in an instant: the gentlewoman is a widow, so you may throw in what raptures you please.

Y. Lov. Never fear. [*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]
——And yet this scene is so new, how to acquit myself—let me recollect—some piece of a play now.—“Vouchsafe divine perfection”—No, that won't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But see, the door opens, so I have no time for rehearsal—I have it—
“Clasp'd in the folds of love I'll meet my doom,
“And act my”——

Enter Mrs. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. Hah!

Y. Lov. By all that's monstrous, my mother!

Mrs. Lov. That rebel my son, as I live!

Y. Lov.

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Y. Lov. The quotation was quite a-propos : had it been a little darker, I might have reviv'd the story of *Œdipus*.

Mrs. Lov. So, Sirrah, what makes you from your studies ?

Y. Lov. A small hint I receiv'd of your inclinations brought me here, ma'am, in order to prevent, if possible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs. Lov. Your father ! how dare you disturb his dear ashes ; you know well enough how his dear memory melts me ; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break.

Y. Lov. Well said, my old matron of *Ephesus*.

Mrs. Lov. That is what you want, you disobedient unnatural monster ; but compleat, accomplish your cruelty : send me the same road your villanies forc'd your father to take.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Hey-day ! What the deuce have we here ; our old lady in tears !

Mrs. Lov. Disappointed a little ; that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Pray, ma'am, what can occasion——

Mrs. Lov. Lord blefs me, Mrs. Mechlin, what a blunder you have made.

Mrs. Mech. A blunder ! as how ?

Mrs. Lov. Do you know who you have brought me ?

Mrs. Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs. Lov. My own son ! that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Your son !

Mrs.

THE COMMISSARY. 63

Mrs. Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural—

Mrs. Mech. Blunder indeed ! But who cou'd have thought it ; why, by your account, ma'am, I imagin'd your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs. Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter FUNGUS and DOLLY.

Fun. What is the matter ; you make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs. Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set eyes on her son since the death of his father ; and being apprised by me, that here she might meet with him, came with a true paternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs. Lov. Well said, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—be comforted, ma'am ; you had better repose on my bed.

Mrs. Lov. Any where to get out of his sight.

Mrs. Mech. Here, Jenny.

Mrs. Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party.

Mrs. Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh— [Exit coughing]

Mrs. Mech. Bear up a little, ma'am.

Fun. Fye upon you, you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the stericks.

T. Lov.

Y. Lev Sir!

Fun You a man, you are a scandal, a shame to your sect.

Enter Dr. CATGUT.

Dr. Cat. Come, come, Mrs. Mechlin, are the couple prepar'd; the fiddles are tun'd, the bows ready rosin'd, and the whole band—Oh, you, Sir, are one party I reckon, but where is the—Ah, Dolly, what are you here, my dear?

Dolly. Soh!

Fun. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

Dr. Cat. As nice and as spruce too, the bride-maid I warrant: Why you look as blooming, you flut.

Fun. What can this be? hark ye, Sir!

Dr. Cat. Well, Sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr. Cat. Rank and condition: what, Dolly?

Fun. Dolly! what a plague possesses the man; this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr. Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is lady Scracarissa Mackirkincroft.

Dr. Cat. Who?

Fun. Descended from the old, old, old earl of Glendowery.

Dr. Cat. What she, Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly Devil, the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, will you set this matter to rights?

Mrs. Mech. How, Dr. Catgut!

Fun. The strangest fellow here has danc'd upstairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady; who the plague can he be?

Dr. Cat. Oh, a-propos, Molly Mechlin, what is this the man that is to be married? the marriage will never hold good; why he is more frantic and madder——

Fun. Mad! John fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you scoundrel.

Enter ISAAC FUNGUS and JENNY.

I. Fun. Where's brother, it a'n't over; you be'n't marry'd, I hope.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the ——

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into! Your servant, good madam; what this is the person, I warrant; ay, how pretty the puppet is painted; do you know who she is?

Z. Fun. Who she is? without doubt.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac. only the spawn of that devil incarnate, dress'd out as——

Z. Fun. But hark ye, Isaac, are——don't be in a hurry—are you sure——

Z. Fun. Sure—the girl of the house, abhorring their scandalous project, has freely confessed the whole scheme. Jenny, stand forth, and answer boldly to what I shall ask, Is not this wench the woman's niece of the house?

K

Jen.

66 THE COMMISSARY.

Jen. I fancy she will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this mistress of yours a most profligate——

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, Master Isaac, I will save you the trouble, and cut this matter short in an instant:—well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And ar'n't you ashamed?

Y. Lev. She ashamed! I would have told you, but I could not get you to listen; why she brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fun. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monster! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incest. But hark ye, brother Isaac, [*they retire*]——

Dr. Cat. Gads my life, what a sweet project I have help'd to destroy; but come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again; thou hast a good pretty voice, I'll teach thee a thrill and a shake, perch thee amongst the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a mistress, which, as the world goes, is a much better station than that of a wife, not the proudest of them all——

Mrs. Mech. Mistress! No, no, we have not manag'd our matters so badly. Hark ye, Mr. Commissary.

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs. Mech. Do you propose to consummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty question, indeed.

Mrs. Mech. You have no objection then to paying the penalty, the contract here that Mr. Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fun. The contract, hey, brother Isaac.

I. Fun. Let me see it.

Mrs.

THE COMMISSARY. 67

Mrs. Mech. Soft you there, my maker of candles, it is as well where it is ; but you need not doubt of its goodness : I promise you the best advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damn'd fiend, what a harpy !

Mrs. Mech. And why so, my good master Fungus ; is it because I have practis'd that trade by retail which you have carried on in the gross ? What injury do I do the world ? I feed on their follies, 'tis true ; and the game, the plunder, is fair ; but the fangs of you and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel :
To their candour and justice I make my appeal ;
Tho' a poor humble scourge in a national cause,
As I trust I deserve, I demand your applause.

F I N I S

P L A Y S

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The Lame Lover, in Three Acts.
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THE
LAME LOVER,

A
COMEDY

IN THREE ACTS.

As it is Performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in the HAY-MARKET.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

LONDON,

Printed for PAUL VAILLANT: and sold by P. ELMSLY,
in the Strand; and ROBINSON and ROBERTS, No. 25,
Pater-noster-Row. MDCCLXX.



TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
FRANCIS SEYMOUR CONWAY,
EARL OF HERTFORD,
LORD CHAMBERLAIN OF
HIS MAJESTY'S HOUSHOLD,
TO WHOSE
POLITENESS AND CANDOUR
THE AUTHOR
OWES EVERY ACKNOWLEDGMENT,
THIS COMEDY IS
GRATEFULLY DEDICATED
BY
HIS LORDSHIP'S
MOST OBLIGED
AND
MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

North End,

SAM. FOOTE.



P R O L O G U E.

Written and Spoken by Mr. GENTLEMAN.

PROLOGUES, like cards of compliment, we find,
Most as unmeaning as politely kind ;
To beg a favour, or to plead excuse,
Of both appears to be the gen'ral use.

Shall my words, tipt with flattery, prepare
A kind exertion of your tend'rest care ?
Shall I present our Author to your sight,
All pale and trembling for his fate this night ?
Shall I solicit the most pow'rful arms
To aid his cause—the force of beauty's charms ?
Or tell each critic, his approving taste
Must give the sterling stamp, wherever plac'd ?
This might be done—but so to seek applause
Argues a conscious weakness in the cause.
No—let the Muse in simple truth appear,
Reason and Nature are the judges here :
If by their strict and self-describing laws,
The sev'ral characters to-night she draws ;
If from the whole a pleasing piece is made,
On the true principles of light and shade ;
Struck with the harmony of just design,
Your eyes—your ears—your hearts, will all combine
To grant applause :—but if an erring hand
Gross disproportion marks in motley band,
If the group'd figures false connexions show,
And glaring colours without meaning glow,
Your wounded feelings, turn'd a diff'rent way,
Will justly damn—th' abortion of a play.

As Farquhar has observ'd, our English law,
Like a fair spreading oak, the Muse should draw,
By Providence design'd, and wisdom made
For honesty to thrive beneath its shade ;
Yet from its boughs some insects shelter find,
Dead to each nobler feeling of the mind,
Who thrive, alas ! too well, and never cease
To prey on justice, property, and peace.

P R O L O G U E.

*At such to-night, with other legal game,
Our vent'rous author takes satiric aim;
And brings, he hopes, originals to view,
Nor pilfers from th' Old Magpie, nor the New*.
But will to Candour chearfully submit;
She reigns in boxes, galleries, and pit.*

* Alluding to Mr. Garrick's Prologue to the Jubilee.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir LUKE LIMP,	<i>Mr. Foote.</i>
Serjeant CIRCUIT,	<i>Mr. Vandermere.</i>
Colonel SECRET,	<i>Mr. Robson.</i>
JACK,	<i>Mr. Weston.</i>
Mr. WOODFORD,	<i>Mr. Knowles.</i>
Mr. FAIRPLAY,	<i>Mr. Wheeler.</i>
First SERVANT,	<i>Mr. Dancer.</i>
Second SERVANT,	<i>Mr. Griffiths.</i>

W O M E N.

Mrs. CIRCUIT,	<i>Mrs. Gardner.</i>
CHARLOT,	<i>Mrs. Jewell.</i>
Mrs. SIMPER,	<i>Mrs. Saunders.</i>
BETTY,	<i>Mrs. Read.</i>

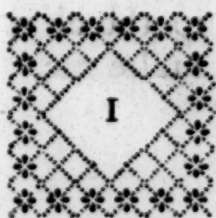


THE
LAME LOVER.

A C T I.

Enter Serjeant CIRCUIT *and* CHARLOT.

CHARLOT.



Tell you, Sir, his love to me is all a pretence: it is amazing that you, who are so acute, so quick in discerning on other occasions, should be so blind upon this.

SERJEANT.

But where are your proofs, Charlot? What signifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot support?

CHARLOT.

Surely, Sir, strong circumstances in every court should have weight.

B

SER.

2 THE LAME LOVER.

SERJEANT.

So they have collaterally, child, that is by way as it were of corroboration, or where matters are doubtful; then indeed, as Plowden wisely, observes "*Les circonstances ajout beaucoup de poids aux faits.*"—You understand me?

CHARLOT.

Not perfectly well.

SERJEANT.

Then to explain by case in point; A, we will suppose, my dear, robs B of a watch upon Hounslow heath—dy'e mind, child?

CHARLOT.

I do, Sir.

SERJEANT.

A, is taken up and indicted; B swears positively to the identity of A.—Dy'e observe?

CHARLOT.

Attentively.

SERJEANT.

Then what does me A, but sets up the alibi C, to defeat the affidavit of B.—You take me.

CHARLOT.

Clearly.

SERJEANT.

So far you see then the ballance is even.

CHARLOT.

True.

SERJEANT.

But then to turn the scale, child, against A, in favour of B, they produce the circumstance D, viz. B's watch found in the pocket of A; upon which

THE LAME LOVER. 3

which, the testimony of C being contradicted by B,—no, by D,—why then A, that is to say C,—no D,—joining B, they convict C,—no, no, A,—against the affidavit of C.—So this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

CHARLOT.

Very obliging, Sir. But suppose now, Sir, it should appear that the attention of Sir Luke Limp is directed to some other object, would not that induce you to—

SERGEANT.

Other object! Where?

CHARLOT.

In this very house.

SERGEANT.

Here! why the girl is non compos; there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigals.

CHARLOT.

No, Sir?

SERGEANT.

No.

CHARLOT.

Yes, Sir, one person else.

SERGEANT.

Who is that?

CHARLOT.

But remember, Sir, my accusation is confined to Sir Luke.

SERGEANT.

Well, well.

B 2

CHAR-

4 THE LAME LOVER.

CHARLOT.

Suppose then, Sir, those powerful charms which made a conquest of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke?

SERGEANT.

Why, huffy, you don't hint at your mother-in-law?

CHARLOT.

Indeed, Sir, but I do.

SERGEANT.

Ay; why this is point blank treason against my sovereign authority: but can you, Charlot, bring proof of any overt acts?

CHARLOT

Overt acts!

SERGEANT.

Ay; that is any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth is sufficient; then let 'em demur if they dare.

CHARLOT.

I can't say that, Sir; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

SERGEANT.

Which?

CHARLOT.

In those cases a very infallible one—the eye.

SERGEANT.

Pshaw! nonsense and stuff.—The eye!—The eye has no authority in a court of law.

CHARLOT.

Perhaps not, Sir; but it is a decisive evidence in a court of love.

THE LAME LOVER. 5

SERJEANT.

Hark you, huffy, why you would not file an information against the virtue of madam your mother; you would not insinuate that she has been guilty of crim. con.?

CHARLOT.

Sir, you mistake me; it is not the lady, but the gentleman I am about to impeach.

SERJEANT.

Have a care, Charlot! I see on what ground your action is founded—jealousy.

CHARLOT.

You were never more deceiv'd in your life; for it is impossible, my dear Sir, that jealousy can subsist without love.

SERJEANT.

Well.

CHARLOT.

And from that passion (thank heaven) I am pretty free at present.

SERJEANT.

Indeed!

CHARLOT.

A sweet object to excite tender desires!

SERJEANT.

And why not, huffy?

CHARLOT.

First as to his years.

SERJEANT.

What then?

CHAR-

6 THE LAME LOVER.

CHARLOT.

I own, Sir, age procures honor, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

SERGEANT.

Mighty well.

CHARLOT.

And tho' the loss of a leg can't be imputed to Sir Luke Limp as a fault—

SERGEANT.

How!

CHARLOT.

I hope, Sir, at least you will allow it a misfortune.

SERGEANT.

Indeed!

CHARLOT.

A pretty thing truly, for a girl, at my time of life, to be ty'd to a man with one foot in the grave.

SERGEANT.

One foot in the grave! the rest of his body is not a whit the nearer for that.—There has been only an execution issued against part of his personals, his real estate is unencumbered and free—besides, you see he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry, as a defendant after non-suiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

CHARLOT.

O! Sir! I know how proud Sir Luke is of his leg, and have often heard him declare, that he would not change his bit of timber for the best flesh and bone in the kingdom.

SER-

THE LAME LOVER. 7

SERJEANT.

There's a hero for you!

CHARLOT.

To be sure, sustaining unavoidable evils with constancy is a certain sign of greatness of mind.

SERJEANT.

Doubtless.

CHARLOT.

But then to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not I'm afraid be admitted as a vast instance of wisdom, and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to distinguish himself by.

SERJEANT.

How does that follow?

CHARLOT.

By inunendo.

SERJEANT.

Negatnr.

CHARLOT.

Besides, Sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mention'd.

SERJEANT.

Cite them.

CHARLOT.

The paltry ambition of levying and following titles.

SERJEANT.

Titles! I don't understand you?

CHARLOT.

I mean the poverty of fastening in public upon men of distinction, for no other reason but because

8 THE LAME LOVER.

cause of their rank; adhering to Sir John till the Baronet is superceded by my Lord; quitting the puny Peer for an Earl; and sacrificing all three to a Duke.

S E R J E A N T.

Keeping good company! a laudable ambition!

C H A R L O T.

True, Sir, if the virtues that procur'd the father a peerage, could with that be entail'd on the son.

S E R J E A N T.

Have a care, huffy—there are severe laws against speaking evil of dignities.—

C H A R L O T.

Sir!

S E R J E A N T.

Scandalum magnatum is a statute must not be trifled with: why you are not one of those vulgar fluts that think a man the worse for being a Lord?

C H A R L O T.

No, Sir; I am contented with only, not thinking him the better.

S E R J E A N T.

For all this, I believe, huffy, a right honourable proposal would soon make you alter your mind.

C H A R L O T.

Not unless the proposer had other qualities than what he possesses by patent. Besides, Sir, you know Sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

S E R J E A N T.

Not a whit the less honest for that.

C H A R-

THE LAME LOVER. 9

CHARLOT.

It occasions one evil at least ; that when under its influence, he generally reveals all, sometimes more than he knows.

SERGEANT.

Proofs of an open temper, you baggage : but, come, come, all these are but trifling objections.

CHARLOT.

You mean, Sir, they prove the object a trifle.

SERGEANT.

Why you pert jade, do you play on my words? I say Sir Luke is—

CHARLOT.

Nobody.

SERGEANT.

Nobody ! how the deuce do you make that out?—He is neither person attained or outlaw'd, may in any of his majesty's courts sue or be sued, appear by attorney, or in propria persona, can acquire, buy, procure, purchase, possess, and inherit, not only personalities, such as goods, and chattels, but even realities, as all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatsoever, and wheresoever.

CHARLOT.

But, Sir—

SERGEANT.

Nay, further child, he may sell, give, bestow, bequeath, devise, demise, lease, or to farm lett, ditto lands, to any person whomsoever—and—

C

CHAR-

10 THE LAME LOVER.

CHARLOT.

Without doubt, Sir; but there are notwithstanding in this town a great number of nobodies, not described by lord Coke.

SERJEANT.

Hey!

CHARLOT.

There is your next-door neighbour, Sir Harry Hen, an absolute blank.

SERJEANT.

How so, Mrs. Pert?

CHARLOT.

What, Sir! a man who is not suffer'd to hear, see, smell, or in short to enjoy the free use of any one of his senses; who, instead of having a positive will of his own, is deny'd even a paltry negative; who can neither resolve or reply, consent or deny, without first obtaining the leave of his lady: an absolute monarch to sink into the sneaking state of being a slave to one of his subjects—Oh fye!

SERJEANT.

Why, to be sure, Sir Harry Hen, is as I may say—

CHARLOT.

Nobody Sir, in the fullest sense of the word—Then your client Lord Solo.

SERJEANT.

Heyday!—Why you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious estate and an allow'd judge too of the elegant arts.

CHAR-

THE LAME LOVER. 11

CHARLOT.

O yes, Sir, I am no stranger to that nobleman's attributes ; but then, Sir, please to consider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy ; the direction of his estate, to a rapacious, artful attorney : and as to his skill in the elegant arts, I presume you confine them to painting and music, he is directed in the first by Mynheer Van Eisel, a Dutch dauber ; and in the last is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his lordship's mistress and an opera singer.

SERJEANT.

Mercy upon us ! at what a rate the jade runs !

CHARLOT.

In short, Sir, I define every individual who, ceasing to act for himself, becomes the tool, the mere engine of another man's will, to be nothing more than a cypher.

SERJEANT.

At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world : but what is all this to Sir Luke ? to him, not one of your cases apply.

CHARLOT.

Every one—Sir Luke has not a first principle in his whole composition ; not only his pleasures, but even his passions are prompted by others ; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and dressing. Nay, though he is active, and eternally busy, yet his own private affairs are neglected ; and he would not scruple to break an appointment that was to determine a considerable part of his property, in order to

C 2

exchange

12 THE LAME LOVER.

exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himself best; I hear his stump on the stairs.

S E R J E A N T,

I hope you will preserve a little decency before your lover at least.

C H A R L O T.

Lover! ha, ha, ha!

Enter Sir LUKE LIMP.

Sir L U K E.

Mr. Serjeant, your slave—Ah! are you there my little—O Lord! Miss, let me tell you something for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new christen'd, and have had me for a gossip?

C H A R L O T.

Christen'd! I don't understand you.

Sir L U K E.

Then lend me your ear—Why last night, as Colonel Kill'em, Sir William Weezy, Lord Frederick Foretop, and I were carelessly sliding the Ranelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damn'd muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who should trip by but an abbess, well known about town, with a smart little nun in her suite. Says Weezy (who, between ourselves, is as husky as hell) Who is that? odds flesh, she's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried Lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been, not to have seen the Harietta before? for you must know Frederick is a bit of Macaroni, and adores the soft Italian termination in *a*.

THE LAME LOVER. 13

CHARLOT.

He does?

Sir LUKE.

Yes, a delitanti all over.—Before? replied Weezy; crush me if ever I saw any thing half so handsome before!—No! replied I in an instant; Colonel, what will Weezy say when he sees the Charlotta?—Hey! you little——

CHARLOT.

Meaning me, I presume.

Sir LUKE.

Without doubt; and you have been toasted by that name ever since.

SERGEANT.

What a vast fund of spirits he has!

Sir LUKE.

And why not, my old splitter of causes?

SERGEANT.

I was just telling Charlot, that you was not a whit the worse for the loss.

Sir LUKE.

The worse! much the better, my dear. Consider, I can have neither strain, splint, spavin, or gout; have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man should kick my shins, or tread on my toes.

SERGEANT.

Right.

Sir LUKE.

What d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumsticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

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S E R J E A N T.

No!

Sir L U K E.

No, damn it, I am much better.—Look there—Ha!—What is there I am not able to do? To be sure I am a little awkward at running; but then, to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his fun.

S E R J E A N T.

Ay, and I'll go his halves.

Sir L U K E.

Then as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, because of the croud; but as far as a private set of six couple, or moving a chair-minuet, match me who can.

C H A R L O T.

A chair-minuet! I don't understand you.

Sir L U K E.

Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and chest, which may fitting be as fully displayed, as if one had as many legs as a polypus.—As thus—tol de rol—don't you see?

S E R J E A N T.

Very plain.

Sir L U K E.

A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature. In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are, with but half the things that we have.

C H A R L O T.

Ay, Sir Luke; how do you prove that?

Sir

THE LAME LOVER. 15

Sir L U K E.

By constant experience.—You must have seen the man who makes and uses pens without hands.

S E R J E A N T.

I have.

Sir L U K E.

And not a twelvemonth ago, I lost my way in a fog, at Mile-End, and was conducted to my house in May-Fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

S E R J E A N T.

Wonderful!

Sir L U K E.

And as to hearing and speaking, those organs are of no manner of use in the world.

S E R J E A N T.

How!

Sir L U K E.

If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family, dumb as oysters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

S E R J E A N T.

Why, Charlot, these are cases in point.

Sir L U K E.

Oh! clear as a trout-stream; and it is not only, my little Charlot, that this piece of timber answers every purpose, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

S E R J E A N T.

Ay!

Sir

16 THE LAME LOVER.

Sir L U K E.

Why, it was but last summer, at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole season by a bullet-headed Swiss from the canton of Bern, who was always boasting, what, and how much he dared do; and then, as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes, held it more in contempt.—By gods, he was no more minds it dan notings at all—So, foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

S E R J E A N T.

As how!—Mind, Charlot.

Sir L U K E.

Why to drive a corkin pin into the calves of our legs.

S E R J E A N T.

Well, well.

Sir L U K E.

Mine, you may imagine, was easily done—but when it came to the Baron—

S E R J E A N T.

Ay, ay.

Sir L U K E.

Our modern Cato soon lost his coolness and courage, screw'd his nose up to his foretop, rapp'd out a dozen oaths in high Dutch, limp'd away to his lodgings, and was there laid up for a month—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant, and delivers a Card to Sir Luke.

Sir L U K E *reads.*

“ Sir Gregory Goose desires the honour of
“ Sir Luke Limp's company to dine. An an-
“ swer

THE LAME LOVER. 17

"swer is desired." Gadso! a little unlucky;
I have been engag'd for these three weeks.

S E R J E A N T.

What, I find Sir Gregory is return'd for the
corporation of *Fleesum*.

Sir L U K E.

Is he so? Oh ho!—That alters the case.—
George, give my compliments to Sir Gregory,
and I'll certainly come and dine there. Order
Joe to run to alderman Inkle's, in Threadneedle-
street; sorry can't wait upon him, but confin'd
to bed two days with *new influenza*.

C H A R L O T.

You make light, Sir Luke, of these sort of
engagements.

Sir L U K E.

What can a man do? These damn'd fel-
lows (when one has the misfortune to meet
them) take scandalous advantage; teaze, When
will you do me the honour, pray, Sir Luke, to
take a bit of mutton with me? Do you name
the day.—They are as bad as a beggar, who
attacks your coach at the mounting of a hill;
there is no getting rid of them, without a penny
to one, and a promise to t'other.

S E R J E A N T.

True; and then for such a time too—three
weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remem-
ber. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term
for the summer assizes.

Sir L U K E.

Not but, upon these occasions, no man in
England is more punctual than——

D

Enter

18 THE LAME LOVER.

Enter a Servant, who gives Sir Luke a Letter.

From whom?

S E R V A N T.

Earl of Brentford. The servant waits for an answer.

Sir L U K E.

Answer!—By your leave, Mr. Serjeant and Charlot. [*Reads.*] “Taste for music—Monf. “Duport—fail—Dinner upon table at five”—Gadso! I hope Sir Gregory’s servant an’t gone.

S E R V A N T.

Immediately upon receiving the answer.

Sir L U K E.

Run after him as fast as you can—tell him, quite in despair—recollect an engagement that can’t in nature be missed,—and return in an instant.

C H A R L O T.

You see, Sir, the Knight must give way for my Lord.

Sir L U K E.

No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlot; you saw that was quite an extempore business.—No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but to tell you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his house.

C H A R L O T.

By the choice of his company he gives an unanswerable instance of that.

Sir

THE LAME LOVER. 19

Sir L U K E.

You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit: You know Brentford's finances are a little out of repair, which procures him some visits that he would very gladly excuse.

S E R J E A N T.

What need he fear? His person is sacred; for by the tenth of William and Mary—

Sir L U K E.

He knows that well enough; but for all that—

S E R J E A N T.

Indeed, by a late act of his own house, (which does them infinite honour) his goods or chattels may be——

Sir L U K E.

Seiz'd upon when they can find them; but he lives in ready-furnish'd lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

S E R J E A N T.

Nay, if the sheriff return "non inventus"—

Sir L U K E.

A pox o'your law, you make me lose sight of my story. One morning, a Welch coach-maker came with his bill to my Lord, whose name was unluckily Loyd. My Lord had the man up. You are call'd, I think, Mr. Loyd?—At your Lordship's service, my Lord.—What, Loyd with an L?—It was with an L indeed, my Lord.—Because in your part of the world I have heard that Loyd and Floyd were

20 THE LAME LOVER.

synonymous, the very same names.—Very often indeed, my lord.—But you always spell your's with an L?—Always.—That, Mr. Loyd, is a little unlucky; for you must know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L.—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

There was no overtaking the servant.

Sir LUKE.

That is unlucky: tell my Lord I'll attend him.—I'll call on Sir Gregory myself.

SERGEANT.

Why, you won't leave us, Sir Luke?

Sir LUKE.

Pardon, dear Serjeant and Charlotta; have a thousand things to do for half a million of people positively; promised to procure a husband for Lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horse for Brigadier Whip; after that, must run into the city to borrow a thousand for young At-all at Almack's; send a Cheshire cheese by the stage to Sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get at the Herald's Office a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arriv'd: so you see I have not a moment to lose.

SERGEANT,

True, true,

Sir

THE LAME LOVER. 21

Sir L U K E.

At your toilet to-morrow at ten you may—

Enter a SERVANT abruptly, and runs against
Sir L U K E.

Can't you see where you are running, you rascal!

S E R V A N T.

Sir, his grace the Duke of——

Sir L U K E.

Grace!—Where is he?—Where—

S E R V A N T.

In his coach at the door.—If you an't better engaged would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Dolly's.

Sir L U K E.

In his own coach did you say?

S E R V A N T.

Yes, Sir.

Sir L U K E.

With the coronets—or—

S E R V A N T.

I believe so.

Sir L U K E.

There's no resisting of that.—Bid Joe run to Sir Gregory Goose's.

S E R V A N T.

He is already gone to alderman Inkle's.

Sir L U K E.

Then do you step to the Knight—hey!—no—you must go to my Lord's—hold, hold, no—I
I have

22 THE LAME LOVER.

have it—Step first to Sir Greg's, then pop in at Lord Brentford's just as the company are going to dinner.

SERVANT.

What shall I say to Sir Gregory?

Sir LUKE.

Any thing—what I told you before.

SERVANT.

And what to my Lord?

Sir LUKE.

What!—Why tell him that my uncle from Epsom—no—that won't do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—Why tell him—hold I have it—Tell him, that as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arrested by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney coach, and carried to the Py'd Bull in the Borough; I beg ten thousand pardons for making his grace wait, but his grace knows my misfor—

[Exit Sir Luke.]

CHARLOT.

Well, Sir, what dy'e think of the proofs? I flatter myself I have pretty well established my case.

SERJEANT.

Why, huffy, you have hit upon points; but then they are but trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title, that stands unimpeach'd; and—But, madam, your mother.

Enter

THE LAME LOVER. 23

Enter Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

What have you done with the Knight?—Why you have not let him depart?

CHARLOT.

It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

I don't wonder at that; but what took him away?

CHARLOT.

What will at any time take him away—a Duke at the door.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Are you certain of that?

SERGEANT.

Why truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man that is just going to be marry'd.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

The prospect of marriage does not always prove the strongest attachment.

SERGEANT.

Pardon me, lovee; the law allows no higher consideration than marriage.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Pshaw!

SERGEANT.

Infomuch, that if duke A was to intermarry with chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the settlement.

Mrs.

24 THE LAME LOVER.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Indeed !

SERJEANT.

Ay ; and this was held to be law by Chief-baron Bind'em, on the famous case of the Marquis of Cully, and Fanny Flip-flap the French dancer.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

The greater blockhead the Baron : but don't pester me with your odious law cases.—Did not you tell me you was to go to Kingston to day to try the crown causes ?

SERJEANT.

I was begg'd to attend for fear his Lordship should not be able to sit ; but if it proves inconvenient to you—

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

To me ! Oh, by no means in the world ; I am too good a subject to desire the least delay in the law's execution : and when d'ye set out ?

SERJEANT.

Between one and two ; I shall only just give a law lecture to Jack.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Lord ! I wonder Mr. Circuit you would breed that boy up to the bar.

SERJEANT.

Why not, chuck ? He has fine steady parts, and for his time moots a point—

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Steady ! stupid you mean : nothing sure cou'd add to his heaviness but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him into the army ?

SER-

THE LAME LOVER. 25

SERJEANT.

Nay, chuck, if you choose it, I believe I have interest to get Jack a commission.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Why, Mr. Circuit, you know he is no son of mine; perhaps a cockade may animate the lad with some fire.

SERJEANT.

True, lovee; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiss to restrain his fire a little.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding that way.

SERJEANT.

Charlot, send hither your brother.

[Exit Charlot.]

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

I'll not interrupt you

SERJEANT.

Far from it, lovee; I should be glad to have you a witness of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Of that I am no judge; besides, I am full of business to day—There is to be a ballot at one for the *Ladies' Club* lately established, and lady Bab Basto has proposed me for a member.—Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my Lord Loo?

SERJEANT.

The three hundred you mean?

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

And besides, there is my debt to Kitty Cribbidge; I protest I almost blush whenever I meet them.

E

SER-

26 THE LAME LOVER.

SERJEANT.

Why really, lovee, 'tis a large sum of money.—Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this business.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

I don't understand you.

SERJEANT.

Bring an action against them on the statute, in the name of my clerk; and so not only rescue the *debt* from their hands, but recover likewise considerable *damages*.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

A pretty conceit, Mr. Serjeant! but does it not occur to your wisdom, that as I have (by the help of Captain Cog) been oftener a winner than loser, the tables may be turned upon *us*?

SERJEANT.

No, no, chuck, that did not escape me; I have provided for that.—Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable; so that, lovee, we shall be able to fleece your friends not only of what they have *won* of poor dearee, but likewise for what they have *lost*.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Why, what a paltry, pettifogging puppy art thou!—And could you suppose that I would submit to the scandalous office?

SERJEANT.

Scandalous! I don't understand this strange perversion of words. The scandal lies in *breaking* the *laws*, not in bringing the offenders to *justice*.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Mean-spirited wretch!—What, do you suppose

THE LAME LOVER. 27

pose that those laws could be levell'd against people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any set of men would submit to lay legal restraints on *themselves*?—Absurd and preposterous!

SERJEANT.

Why, by their public practice, my love, one would suspect that they thought themselves excepted by a particular clause.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Oh! to be sure; not the least doubt can be made.

SERJEANT.

True, chuck—But then your great friends should never complain of highwaymen stopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houses.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Why, what has that to do with the business?

SERJEANT.

Oh! the natural consequence, lovee; for whilst the superiors are throwing away their fortunes, and consequently their independence *above*—you can't think but their domestics are following their examples *below*.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Well, and what then?

SERJEANT.

Then! the same distress that throws the master and mistress into the power of any who are willing to purchase them, by a regular gradation, seduces the servants to actions, though more *criminal*, perhaps not more *atrocious*.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

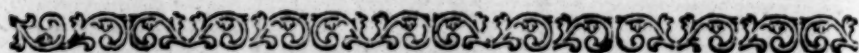
Pshaw! stuff!—I have no head to examine

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your dirty distinctions—Don't teize me with your jargon.—I have told you the sums I shall want, so take care they are ready at your returning from Kingston.—Nay, don't hesitate; recollect your own state of the case, and remember, my honour is in pawn, and must, some way or other, be redeem'd by the end of the week. [*Exit.*]

SERJEANT *solus.*

My honour is in pawn!—Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words!—Formerly, *chastity* was the honour of women, and *good faith* and *integrity* the honour of men: but *now*, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her losses at play, and a gentleman who kills his best friend in some trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-top people of *honour*. Well, let them go on, it brings grist to our mill: for whilst both the sexes stick firm to their *honour*, we shall never want business, either at Doctor's Commons, or the Old Bailey. [*Exit.*]



A C T II.

Enter SERJEANT CIRCUIT *and* JACK.

SERJEANT.

JACK, let Will bring the chaise to the door.

JACK.

Mr. Fairplay, Sir, the attorney, begs to speak a few words.

SER-

THE LAME LOVER. 29

SERJEANT.

How often have I told you, that I will see none of these sort of folks but at chambers; you know how angry your mother is at their rapping, and littering the house.

JACK.

He says, Sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

SERJEANT.

Well, bid him walk in.

Enter FAIRPLAY.

Well, Mr. Fairplay, what's your will?

FAIRPLAY.

I just call'd, Mr. Serjeant, to know your opinion upon the case of young Woodford, and if you like the proposal of being concern'd.

SERJEANT.

If it turns out as you state it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Essex estate may without doubt be recover'd; and so may the lands in the North.

FAIRPLAY.

We have full proofs to that fact.

SERJEANT.

May be so; but really Mr. Fairplay, you know the length of time that these kind of suits—

FAIRPLAY.

True Sir, but then your experience will shorten I appreh—

SERJEANT.

That's more than I know: and then not only my fees lying dormant, but, perhaps, an expectation of money advanc'd.

FAIR-

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FAIRPLAY.

The property, Sir, is of very great value, and, upon the recovery, any acknowledgment shall be readily made.

SERGEANT.

There again, *any*! do you know that in law, that word *any* has no meaning at all? besides, when people are in distress, they are lavish enough of their offers; but when their business is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

FAIRPLAY.

You have only to dictate your terms.

SERGEANT.

Does the lad live in town?

FAIRPLAY.

He has been under my care since the death of his father; I have given him as good an education as my narrow fortune would let me; he is now studying the law in the Temple, in hopes that should he fail of other assistance, he may be able one day to do *himself* justice.

SERGEANT.

In the Temple?

FAIRPLAY.

Yes, Sir, in those little chambers just over your head—I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

JACK.

Who? Mr. Woodford! Lord as well as myself, he is a sweet sober youth, and will one day make a vast figure, I am sure.

SERGEANT.

Indeed!

JACK.

I am positive, Sir, if you were to hear him
speak

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Speak at the Robinhood in the Butcher-row, you would say so yourself: why he is now reckon'd the third; except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawny Sinclair the snuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him.

S E R J E A N T.

Peace, puppy; well Mr. Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me and—pray who is employ'd against you?

F A I R P L A Y.

A city attorney, one Sheepskin.

S E R J E A N T.

A cunning fellow, I know him; well, Sir, if you will call at Pump-court in a week.

F A I R P L A Y.

I shall attend you.

S E R J E A N T.

Jack, open the door for Mr.—[*Exeunt Fairplay and Jack.*] Something may be made of this matter: I'll see this Sheepskin myself. So much in future for carrying on the suit, or so much in hand to make it miscarry: a wise man should well weigh which party to take for.

Enter Jack.

So, Jack, any body at chambers to day?

J A C K.

Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape against Will Vizard, this term.

S E R J E A N T.

Praying for an equal partition of plunder?

J A C K.

Yes, Sir.

S E R-

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S E R J E A N T.

Strange world we live in, that even highway-men can't be true to each other! [*half aside to himself.*] but we shall make master Vizard refund, we'll shew him what long hands the law has.

J A C K.

Facias says, that in all the books he can't hit on a precedent.

S E R J E A N T.

Then I'll make one myself; *aut inveniam, aut faciam*, has been always my motto. The charge must be made for partnership-profit, by bartering lead and gunpowder, against money, watches, and rings, on Epping-forest, Hounslow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

J A C K.

He says, if the court should get scent of the scheme, the parties would all stand committed.

S E R J E A N T.

Cowardly rascal! but however, the caution mayn't prove amiss. [*Aside.*] I'll not put my own name to the bill.

J A C K.

The declaration too is deliver'd in the cause of Roger Rapp'em against Sir Solomon Simple.

S E R J E A N T.

What, the affair of the note?

J A C K.

Yes.

S E R J E A N T.

Why he is clear that his client never gave such a note.

J A C K.

Defendant never saw plaintiff since the hour he was born; but, notwithstanding, they have
three

THE LAME LOVER. 33

three witnesses to prove a consideration, and signing the note.

S E R J E A N T.

They have?

J A C K.

He is puzzled what plea to put in.

S E R J E A N T.

Three witnesses ready, you say?

J A C K.

Yes.

S E R J E A N T.

Tell him Simple must acknowledge the note, [Jack starts] and bid him, against the trial comes on, to procure *four* persons at least to prove the payment, at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

J A C K.

But then how comes the note to remain in plaintiff's possession?

S E R J E A N T.

Well put, Jack; but we have a *salvo* for that; plaintiff happen'd not to have the note in his pocket, but promis'd to deliver it up, when call'd thereunto by defendant.

J A C K.

That will do rarely.

S E R J E A N T.

Let the defence be a secret, for I see we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to lose time, have you carefully conn'd those instructions I gave you?

J A C K.

Yes, Sir.

F

S E R-

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S E R J E A N T.

Well, that we shall see. How many points are the great object of practice?

J A C K.

Two.

S E R J E A N T.

Which are they?

J A C K.

The first is to put a man into possession of what is his right.

S E R J E A N T.

The second?

J A C K.

Either to deprive a man of what is *really* his right, or to keep him as long as possible *out* of possession.

S E R J E A N T.

Good boy! To gain the last end, what are the best means to be us'd?

J A C K.

Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

S E R J E A N T.

Name them.

J A C K.

Injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, effoigns, and imparlance.

S E R J E A N T.

[*To himself.*] Fine instruments in the hands of a man, who knows how to use them.—But now, Jack, we come to the point: if an able advocate has his choice in a cause, (which if he is in reputation he may readily have,) which side should he choose, the right, or the wrong?

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JACK.

A great lawyer's business, is always to make choice of the wrong.

SERGEANT.

And prythee why so?

JACK.

Because a good cause can speak for itself, whilst a bad one demands an able counsellor to give it a colour.

SERGEANT.

Very well. But in what respects will this answer to the lawyer himself?

JACK.

In a two-fold way; firstly, his fees will be large in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

SERGEANT.

Secondly?—

JACK.

His reputation will rise, by obtaining the victory in a desperate cause.

SERGEANT.

Right, boy. — Are you ready in the case of the cow?

JACK.

Pretty well, I believe.

SERGEANT.

Give it then.

JACK.

First of April, anno seventeen hundred and blank, John a Nokes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for stealing a cow, contra pacem etcet.—and against the statute in that case provided and made, to prevent stealing of cattle.

F 2

SER-

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SERJEANT.

Go on.

JACK.

Said Nokes was convicted upon the said statute.

SERJEANT.

What follow'd upon?—

JACK.

Motion in arrest of judgment, made by counsellor Puzzle. First, Because the field from whence the cow was convey'd is laid in the indictment as *round*, but turn'd out upon proof to be *square*.

SERJEANT.

That's well : a valid objection.

JACK.

Secondly, Because in said indictment the colour of the cow is called red, there being no such things in rerum natura as red cows, no more than black lions, spread eagles, flying griffins, or blue boars.

SERJEANT.

Well put.

JACK.

Thirdly, said Nokes has not offended against form of the statute ; because stealing of *cattle* is there provided against : whereas we are only convicted of stealing a *cow*. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that cows must be cattle.

SERJEANT.

Bravo, bravo ! burs me, you rogue ; you are your father's own son ! go on, and prosper.—I am sorry, dear Jack, I must leave thee. If Providence but sends thee life and health, I prophesy, thou wilt wrest as much land from the owners,

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owners, and save as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner since the days of king Alfred.

JACK.

I'll do my endeavour. [Exit Serjeant.
So!—father is set off. Now if I can but lay eyes on our Charlot, just to deliver this letter, before madam comes home. There she is.—
Hift, sister Charlot!

Enter CHARLOT.

CHARLOT.

What have you got there, Jack?

JACK.

Something for you, sister.

CHARLOT.

For me! Prythee what is it?

JACK.

A thing.

CHARLOT.

What thing?

JACK.

A thing that will please you I'm sure.

CHARLOT.

Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. [Jack gives the letter.] How's this! a letter! from whom?

JACK.

Can't you guess?

CHARLOT.

Not I; I don't know the hand.

JACK.

May be not; but you know the inditer.

CHARLOT.

Then tell me his name.

JACK.

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JACK.

Break open the seal, and you'll find it.

CHARLOT.

[Opening the letter] "Charles Woodford!"—
I am sure I know nothing of him.

JACK.

Ay, but sister you do.

CHARLOT.

How! when, and where?

JACK.

Don't you remember about three weeks ago,
when you drank tea at our chambers, there
was a young gentleman in a blue fatten waist-
coat, who wore his own head of hair?

CHARLOT.

Well?

JACK.

That letter's from he.

CHARLOT.

What can be his business with me?

JACK.

Read that, and you'll know.

CHARLOT reads.

"Want words to apologize—hum, hum—
"very first moment I saw you—hum, hum—
"smother'd long in my breast—hum, hum—
"happiest, or else the most wretched of men."
—So, Sir, you have undertaken a pretty com-
mission! and what do you think my father
will—

JACK.

Why, I hope you won't go for to tell him.

CHARLOT.

Indeed, Sir, but I shall.

JACK.

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JACK.

No, sister, I'm sure you won't be so cross. Besides, what could I do? The poor young lad begg'd so hard; and there for this fortnight he has gone about sighing, and musing, and moping: I am satisfied it would melt you to see him. Do, sister, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

CHARLOT.

Upon my word!—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent; you are for pushing matters at once.—But harkee, Sir, who is this spark you are so anxious about? And how long have you known him?

JACK.

Oh! a prodigious long while: above a month I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel? I assure you he is vastly lik'd by the ladies.

CHARLOT.

He is.

JACK.

Yes, indeed. Mrs. Congo, at the Grecian coffee-house, says, he's the soberest youth that comes to the house; and all Mrs. Mittens's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the window every time he goes by.

CHARLOT.

Upon my word!

JACK.

And moreover, besides that, he has several great estates in the country; but only for the present, he is kept out of 'em all by the owners.

CHARLOT.

Ah, Jack! that's the worst part of the story.

JACK.

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JACK.

Pshaw! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr. Fairplay, has been with father to-day, and says, he is certain that he can set all to rights in a trice.

CHARLOT.

Well, Jack, when that point is determin'd, it will be time enough to—

JACK.

Then! Lord of mercy! why, sister Charlot, it is my private opinion that if you don't give him some crumbs of comfort, he won't live till Midsummer term.

CHARLOT.

I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately depriv'd of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. However, Jack, you may tell your friend, that I have observ'd his frequent walks in our street.

JACK.

Walks! Why one should think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman; for no sooner one is *off*, but the other comes *on*.

CHARLOT.

And that from his eyes being constantly fixed on my window (for the information of which, I presume he is indebted to you.)——

JACK.

He! he! he!

CHARLOT.

I had a pretty shrewd guess at his business; but tell him that unless my fa——Hush! our tyrant is return'd. Don't leave the house till I see you.

THE LAME LOVER. 41

Enter Mrs. CIRCUIT and BETTY.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

So, Sir, what makes you loitering from chambers? I thought I told you, you should never be here but at meals? [*Exit Jack.*] One spy is enough in a family.—Miss, you may go to your room; and d'ye hear—I shall have company, so you need not come down. [*Exit Charlot.*]—Betty, no message or letter?

BETTY.

None, Madam.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

That is amazing!—You know I expect Colonel Secret and Mrs. Simper every instant.

BETTY.

Yes, Madam.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Put the fruit and the wine on the table in the next room.

BETTY.

Very well, Madam.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but Sir Luke.

BETTY.

Madam, I shall take care. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. CIRCUIT *sits down.*

The ballot must be over by this time. Sure there is nothing so dreadful as a state of suspense: but should they black ball me!—No, there's no danger of that; miss Mattadore has insur'd me success.—Well, this is certainly one of the most useful institutions; it positively supplies the only point of time one does not

G

know

42 THE LAME LOVER.

know how to employ. From twelve, the hour of one's rising, to dinner, is a most horrible chasm; for though teizing the mercers and milliners by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amusement, yet upon repetition it palls.—But every morning to be sure of a party, and then again at night after a rout, to have a place to retire to; to be quite freed from all pain of providing; not to be pester'd at table with the odious company of clients, and country cousins; for I am determin'd to dine, and sup at the club, every day. I can tell 'em, they'll have but very few forfeits from me.

Enter BETTY, in haste, with a Letter.

B E T T Y.

By a chairman, Madam, from the Thatch'd House.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Give it me, Betty, this instant;—ay—this is Mattadore's hand. [*opens and reads the letter.*]
“My dear Circuit—it is with the utmost concern, and confusion, I find myself oblig'd to acquaint you, that notwithstanding all the pains I have taken, the club have thought fit to reject.”—Oh! [*she faints.*]

B E T T Y.

Bless my soul! my lady is gone!—John! Will! Kitty! run hither this instant.—

Enter two MAIDS and a Man SERVANT.

A L L.

What, what's the matter?

B E T T Y.

Quick! quick! some hartshorn and water [*pats her hand.*] Madam! madam—

THE LAME LOVER 43

SERVANT.

Here! here! here! [*bringing water.*]

BETTY.

John, go for the *potter-carrier* this instant—I *believe* to my soul she is dead—Kitty, fetch some feathers to burn under her nose;—there, stand further off, and give her some air—

Enter Sir LUKE.

Sir L U K E.

Hey day! what the deuce is the matter? what's the meaning of all this, Mrs. Betty?

BETTY.

Oh! Sir, is it you—my poor lady! [*cries*] clap the bottle hard to her nose.

Sir L U K E.

But how came it about?

BETTY.

Some of the *continents* of that curs'd letter, she has there in her hand.

Sir L U K E.

Here, here, take some of my eau de luce. [*offering a bottle.*]

BETTY.

There! she recovers a little—some water—I believe it is nothing but a *satirical* fit, I have had them myself—now she opens her eyes—so, so—bend her forward a little.

Sir L U K E.

My sweet Mrs. Circuit.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Who is that?

BETTY.

Nobody at all madam, but only Sir Luke.

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Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Oh! Sir Luke, such a stroke, so fatal, so sudden, it is not in nature I should ever survive it.

Sir L U K E.

Marry heaven forbid! but what cause—what could—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Leave the room. [*To the servants, who go out.*] Only, look over that letter.

Sir L U K E.

Hum, hum,—[*reads*] “fit to reject you—this—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

There! there! there!

Sir L U K E.

I own this is the utmost malice of fortune—but let me finish the letter.—“This calamity, “dear Circuit, is of such a nature as baffles all “advice, or interposition of friends, I shall “therefore leave you to time, and your own “good understanding.” [*pretty and sensible.*]— “yours,” &c.—But let us see, what says the postscript—[*reads.*] “Perhaps it may give you “some comfort to know that you had sixteen “almonds, and but two raisins against you.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

But two!

Sir L U K E.

No more.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

This must be Kitty Cribbage’s doing, she has been tattling about the paltry trifle I owe her.

Sir L U K E

Not unlikely: but come, bear up, my dear madam, and consider that *two*—

THE LAME LOVER. 45

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Is as bad as two thousand.

Sir L U K E.

Granted; but perhaps it mayn't be too late to repair.—Gadso! I have thought of a scheme—I'll be elected myself, and then I warrant we manage—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

You, Sir Luke? that never can be.

Sir L U K E.

No, Madam, and why not?—why you don't suppose that they wou'd venture to—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

It would not only be against the spirit, but the very letter of their constitution to chuse you a member.

Sir L U K E.

Ay, Madam, how so?

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Their statutes are selected from all the codes that ever existed from the days of Lycurgus to the present Czarina.

Sir L U K E.

Well.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

The law that relates to your case they have borrow'd from the Roman religion.

Sir L U K E.

As how?

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

As no man can be admitted a monk, who has the least corporal spot, or defect; so, no candidate can be receiv'd as a member who is depriv'd of the use of any one of his limbs.

Sir

46 THE LAME LOVER.

Sir L U K E.

Nay, then indeed I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Indeed, the Serjeant says, if the club could be induc'd to *resolve* in your favour, then the *original law* would signify nothing.

Sir L U K E.

Well, well, we'll see what can be done. [*A loud knocking.*] But hush! the company's come; collect yourself, sweet Mrs. Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious pleasure of seeing how this disappointment affects you.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter Colonel SECRET and Mrs. SIMPER.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

Your servant, Sir Luke; my dear Circuit, I am frighten'd to death—your people tell me, you are but just recover'd from a—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Oh! nothing at all! a faintness, a kind of swimming—but those people are ever swelling that mole hills to mountains.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

I protest I was afraid that you had suffer'd your late disappointment to lay hold of your spirits.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

What disappointment, my dear?

C O L O N E L.

Mrs. Simper hints at the little mistake made this morning at the Thatch'd House.

THE LAME LOVER. 47

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child—all my own doing.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

How!

Sir L U K E.

Entirely.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Oh! I always detested the thoughts of the thing;—they would put me up, let me say what I would, so I was reduc'd to the necessity of prevailing upon two of my friends to *black ball* me.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

That, indeed, alters the case.

C O L O N E L.

I am vastly happy to hear it: your old acquaintance were afraid they should lose you.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

It is a sign they know but little of me—but come, my good folks, I have prepared a small collation in the next room, will you— [*Exeunt.*

Enter JACK and WOODFORD.

J A C K.

I'll watch sifter, to see that nobody comes; now Woodford make good use of your time. [*Exit* Woodford.] There, I have left 'em together; if I had staid, I don't believe they would have open'd their mouths for a month: I never saw such an alteration in a lad since the day I was born.—Why, if I had not known him before, I should not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb:

True

48 THE LAME LOVER.

True lovers are shy,
When people are by.

I'll take a peep to see how they go on:—there they are, just in the same posture I left them; she folding her fingers, and he twirling his hat; why they don't even look at each other: was there ever such a couple of—stay, stay, now he opens his mouth—pshaw!—lord! there he shuts it again—hush! I hear somebody coming—no—nothing at all:—mother is safe I am sure,—there is no danger from her—now let us take t'other—*[peeps at the door.]* hum!—gadso, matters are mightily mended—there! there! very well—there he lays down the law—now he claps his hand on his heart—vastly pretty, I vow—there he swops with both his knees on the ground—charming!—and squeezes his hat with both hands, like one of the actors—delightful! she wants him to rise, and he won't—prodigious moving indeed!

Enter BETTY.

B E T T Y.

So Sir, what are you doing there?

J A C K.

There! where?

B E T T Y.

With your eyes glew'd close to the keyhole.

J A C K.

I wanted to speak a word to my sister.

B E T T Y.

Then why don't you open her door?

J A C K.

I did not know but she might be saying her prayers.

B E T T Y.

THE LAME LOVER. 49

B E T T Y.

Prayers! a likely story! Who says their prayers at this time of the day?—No, no, that won't pass upon me.—Let me look—very pretty! So, so, I see there's somebody else at his prayers too—fine doings!—As soon as the company goes, I shall take care to inform Madam your mother.

J A C K.

Nay, but Mrs. Betty you won't be so—

B E T T Y.

Indeed, Mr. John, but I shall—I'll swallow none of your secrets, believe me.

J A C K.

What, perhaps your stomach is overloaded already.

B E T T Y.

No matter for that, I shall be even with Miss for telling Master about and concerning my drums.

J A C K.

Why, Mrs. Betty, surely sister could not—

B E T T Y.

When she very well knows that I have not sent cards but twice the whole season.

J A C K.

Lord! what signi—

B E T T Y.

What would she say, if she visited the great families I do? For tho' I am as I may say but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman, has a more prettier set of acquaintance.

J A C K.

Well but—

H

B E T

50 THE LAME LOVER.

B E T T Y.

My routs indeed!—There is Mrs. Allspice, who lives with lady Cicily Sequence, has fix tables every Sunday, besides looers, and braggers; and moreover proposes giving a masquerade, the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

J A C K.

Well, but to talk calmly.

B E T T Y.

And as Miss is so fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourselves, as the quality have: the *Distrustful* Mother, 'tis call'd—Pylades, by Mr. Thomas, Lord Catastrophe's butler—Hermione, Mrs. Allspice; and I shall do Andromache myself.

J A C K.

A play! lord, Mrs. Betty, will you give me a ticket?

B E T T Y.

All's one for that—and so you may tell Miss that—[*bell rings*] coming, Madam, this minute—and that, Mr. John, is the long and the short on't. [*Bell rings again.*] Lord, I am coming—[*Exit.*]

Enter WOODFORD *to* JACK.

W O O D F O R D.

What's the matter?

J A C K.

Here, Betty, my mother's fac totum, has just discover'd your haunts; and is gone to lay an information against you—so depend upon it, a search warrant will issue directly.

W O O D F O R D.

Stay but a moment, till I take leave of your sister.

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JACK.

Zooks! I tell you the constables will be here in a trice, so you have not a moment to lose.

WOODFORD.

How unlucky this is!

JACK.

But I hope you have obtain'd a verdict however.

WOODFORD.

No.

JACK.

No!

WOODFORD.

It would not have been decent, to have press'd the judge too soon for a sentence.

JACK.

Soon!—You are a ninny, I tell you so:—here you will suffer judgment to go by default.—You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

WOODFORD.

This, you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity case; I have but just fil'd my bill; one must give the parties time to put in an answer.

JACK.

Time!—How you may come off in court I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber counsel I fear.—Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure another hearing before it is—but lord o'mercy! there is father crossing the hall—should he see us all's over—we have nothing for't but taking shelter with sister.

[*Exeunt.*]

H 2

A C T

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A C T III.

Sir LUKE LIMP, Mrs. CIRCUIT, Colonel SECRET, and Mrs. SIMPER, discover'd at a table, with a collation before them.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

O H! by the bye, Sir Luke—take some of these sweetmeats, my dear [*to Mrs. Simper*]—did not you promise to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera?—Colonel, won't you taste the champaign?

Sir L U K E.

Who, Signior *Piano*?—Let me assist Mrs. Simper.—Why, Madam, I made an attempt; but at present—shan't I send you a biscuit?—he is in the possession of a certain lady, who never suffers him out of her sight for a moment.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vastly fond of these custards.

Sir L U K E.

Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but he promis'd, if possible, to escape for an hour—won't you? [*to Mrs. Circuit.*]

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

No, it gives me the heart-burn.—Then let us leave him a cover.

C O L O N E L.

By all means in the world.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

But there is, likewise, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

Another! Who can that be I wonder?

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Mrs. C I R C U I T.

A small appendix of mine.

Sir L U K E.

How, Madam!

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

You need not be jealous, Sir Luke—taste that tart Mrs. Simper—it is only my husband the Serjeant.—Ha! ha! ha!—Betty makes them herself.

Mrs. S I M P E R.

Oh! you abominable creature! How could such a thought come into your head?

Sir L U K E.

Ma'am— [*Offering sweetmeats to Mrs. Simper.*]

Mrs. S I M P E R.

Not a bit more, I thank you.—I swear and vow I should swoon at the sight.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

And I should receive him with the polite indifference of an absolute stranger.

Sir L U K E.

Well said, my good Lady Intrepid! But, notwithstanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you such an electrical shock——

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

You are vastly deceiv'd.

Sir L U K E.

Dare you come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr. Serjeant? He is not far off.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

What, my husband?

Sir L U K E.

Even he! I saw him as I enter'd the hall.

Mrs.

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Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Impossible !

Sir LUKE.

Nay, then I must fetch him. [*Exit Sir Luke.*]

COLONEL.

I can't conceive what the knight wou'd be at.

Mrs. SIMPER.

Why he is mad.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Or turn'd fool.

Enter Sir LUKE, with the SERJEANT'S peruke on a block.

Sir LUKE.

Now, Madam, have I reason ? Is this your husband or not ?

Mrs. SIMPER.

It is he ; not the least doubt can be made.

COLONEL.

Yes, yes, it is the Serjeant himself.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

I own it ; I acknowledge the lord of my wishes. [*Kisses the block.*]

Mrs. SIMPER.

All his features are there !

COLONEL.

The grave cast of his countenance !

Sir LUKE.

The vacant stare of his eye !

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

The livid hue of his lips !

Mrs. SIMPER.

The rubies with which his cheeks are enrich'd !

COLONEL.

The silent solemnity when he sits on the bench !

THE LAME LOVER. 55

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

We must have him at table; but pray good folks let my husband appear like himself.—I'll run for the gown. *Exit.*

Mrs. SIMPER.

By all means in the world.

Sir LUKE.

Dispatch, I beseech you.

Mrs. CIRCUIT returns with a gown and band.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Sir Luke, lend your assistance.

COLONEL.

There, place him at the head of the table.

[They fix the head at the back of a chair, and place it at table; then all sit.]

Mrs. SIMPER.

Madam, you'll take care of your husband.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs. SIMPER.

Oh, Madam! I know that very well.

Sir LUKE.

Come, Hob or Nob, Master Circuit—let us try if we can't fuddle the Serjeant.

COLONEL.

O! fye! have a proper respect for the coif.

Mrs. SIMPER.

Don't be too facetious, Sir Luke: it is not quite so safe to sport with the heads of the law; you don't know how soon you may have a little business together.

Sir LUKE.

But come, the Serjeant is sulky.—I have thought of a way to divert him:—You know
6 he

56 THE LAME LOVER

he is never so happy as when he is hearing a cause ; suppose we were to plead one before him ; Mrs. Circuit and I to be counsel, the colonel the clerk, and Mrs. Simper the cryer.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

The finest thought in the world ! And stay, to conduct the trial with proper solemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe ; we shall there be able to equip ourselves with suitable dresses.

Sir L U K E.

Alons, alons !

Mrs. S I M P E R.

There is no time to be lost. [All rise.]

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

[Stopping short as they are going out.] But won't my husband be angry, if we leave him alone ? Bye, dearee—we shall soon return to thee again. [Exeunt.]

Enter Serj. CIRCUIT, not perceiving the collation.

S E R J E A N T.

So, my lord not being able to sit, there was no occasion for me.—I can't put that girl's nonsense out of my head—My wife is young to be sure, and loves pleasure I own ; but as to the *main* article, I have not the least ground to suspect her in that—No, no !—And then Sir Luke ! my *prosten ami*, the dearest friend I have in the—Heyday ! [*seeing the collation*] What the deuce have we here ?—A collation !—So, so—I see madam knows how to divert herself during my absence.—What's this ? [*seeing the block*] Oh, ho ! ha ! ha ! ha !—Well, that's pretty enough I protest.—Poor girl, I see she could not be happy without having something at table that resembled me.—How pleas'd she will

THE LAME LOVER. 57

will be to find me here in propriâ personâ.—By your leave, Mrs. Circuit—[*sits down and eats*] Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine [*drinks*]—Champaign as I live—must have t'other glass—They little think how that gentleman there regales himself in their absence—Ha! ha! ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me—Come, brother Coif, here's your health—[*drinks*]—I must pledge myself I believe—[*drinks again*]—devilish strong—pshut!—Somebody's coming—[*gets up and goes towards the wings*]—What do I see? Four lawyers! What the devil can be the meaning of this? I should be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! By your leave, brother Serjeant—I must crave the use of your robe—[*sits down, and gets under the gown*]—Between ourselves, this is not the first time this gown has cover'd a fraud.

Enter Sir LUKE, Colonel, Mrs. CIRCUIT, and Mrs. SIMPER, dressed as counsellors.

Sir L U K E.

Come, come, gentlemen, dispatch, the court has been waiting some time. Brother Circuit, you have look'd over your brief?

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

What, do you suppose, Sir, that like some of our brethren I defer that till I come into court? No, no.

Sir L U K E.

This cause contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

One should think, Sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir L U K E.

Child, I was some years in the Temple; but
I the

58 THE LAME LOVER.

the death of my brother robb'd the robe of my labours.

Mrs. SIMPER.

What a loss to the public!

Sir LUKE.

You are smart, Mrs. Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Snuffle, whose manner I study'd, pronounc'd me a promising youth.

Mrs. SIMPER.

I don't doubt it.

Sir LUKE.

But let us to business. And first, for the state of the case: The parties you know are Hobson and Nobson; the object of litigation is a small parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

True; call'd Turnbury Mead.

Sir LUKE.

Very well. Then to bring matters to a short issue, it was agreed, that Nobson should on the premises cut down a tree, and Hobson bring his action of damage.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

True, true.

Sir LUKE.

The jury being sworn, and the counsellors feed, the court may proceed.—Take your seats—But hold—I hope no gentleman has been touch'd on both sides.

ALL.

Oh! fye!

Sir LUKE.

Let silence be call'd.

Mrs. SIMPER.

Silence in the court!

Sir

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Sir L U K E.

But stop. To be regular, and provide for fresh causes, we must take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but stick fast to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

A L L.

True, true.

Sir L U K E.

Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Gentlemen of the Jury.—I am in this cause counsel for Hobson, the plaintiff.—The action is brought against Nebuchadnezer Nobson, That he the said Nobson did cut down a tree, value two-pence, and to his own use said tree did convert.—Nobson justifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, first state the probable evidence, and then come to the positive: and first as to the probable.—When was this tree here belonging to Hobson, and claim'd by Nobson, cut down? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the sun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on?—No; it was cut down privately, in the night, in a dark night, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see.—Hum—And then with respect and regard to this tree, I am instructed to say, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the spot where it grew. Now can it be thought that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree?—Certainly no.—And again, gentlemen, we moreover insist, that this

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tree was not only ornamental to the spot where it grew, but it was a useful tree to the owner ; it was a plumb-tree, and not only a plum-tree, but I am authoriz'd to say the best of plum-trees, it was a damfin plum.—Now can it be thought, that any man wou'd come for to go, in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree ; which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a useful tree ; and not only a useful tree, but a plum-tree ; and not only a plum-tree, but the best of plum-trees, a damfin plum ? Most assuredly no.—If so be then, that this be so, and so it most certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full costs of suits, in such a manner and so forth, as may nevertheless appear notwithstanding.

Sir L U K E.

Have you done, Mr. Serjeant ?

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

You may proceed.

Sir L U K E.

Gentlemen of the jury—I am in this cause counsel for Hob—Zouns ! I think the head moves.

A L L.

Hey !

C O L O N E L.

No, no, Mrs. Simper jogg'd the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir L U K E.

For Hercules Hobson—(I cou'd have sworn it had stir'd)—I sha'nt gentlemen upon this occasion, attempt to move your passions, by flowing periods, and rhetorical flowers, as Mr. Serjeant

THE LAME LOVER. 61

jeant has done; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way thro' your heads, however thick they may be—in order to which, I will pursue the learned gentleman, thro' what he calls his probable proofs: and first, as to this tree's being cut down in the night; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr. Serjeant; no, quite the reverse, we can prove that the moon shone bright, with uncommon lustre that night—So that if so be as how people did not see that was none—[Serjeant *sneezes.*] nay, Mrs. Circuit, if you break the thread of my—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Me break!—I said nothing I'm sure.

Sir L U K E.

That's true, but you sneez'd.

Mrs. C I R C U I T,

Not I.

Sir L U K E.

I am sure somebody did; it could not be the head—consider the least interruption puts one out of one's—None of our faults, they might have look'd on and seen if they would. And then as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr. Serjeant has ornamented his spot—No, gentlemen, no such matter at all; I am instructed to say quite the reverse; a stunted tree, a blighted, blasted tree; a tree not only limbless, and leafless, but very near lifeless; that was the true state of the tree: and then as to its use, we own it was a plum-tree indeed, but not of the kind Mr. Serjeant sets forth, a damfin plum; our proofs say loudly a bull plum; but if so be and it had been a damfin plum, will any man go for to say, that a damfin plum is the
2 best

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best kind of plum; not a whit, I take upon me to say it is not a noun substantive plum—with plenty of sugar it does pretty well indeed in a tart, but to eat it by itself, will Mr. Serjeant go to compare it with the queen mother, the padrigons—

SERJEANT.

[*Appearing suddenly from under the gown.*]
The green gages, or the orlines.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

As I live 'tis my husband!

SERJEANT.

Nay, Sir Luke don't you run away too—give me a buss—since I was born, I never heard a finer reply; I am sorry I did not hear your argument out—but I cou'd not resist.

Sir LUKE.

This I own was a little surprise—had you been long here Mr. Serjeant?

SERJEANT.

But the instant you enter'd.

Sir LUKE.

So, then all is safe. [*Aside.*]

SERJEANT.

But come, won't you refresh you, Sir Luke—you have had hard duty to day.

Sir LUKE.

I drank very freely at table.

SERJEANT.

Nay, for the matter of that, I ha'n't been idle; [*both drink.*] But come, throw off your gown, and let us finish the bottle: I ha'n't had such a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir LUKE.

Nay then, Mr. Serjeant, have at you—come, here's long life and health to the law. [*Drinks.*]

SER-

THE LAME LOVER. 63

SERJEANT.

I'll pledge that toast in a bumper.—[*Drinks.*]
—I'll take Charlot's hint, and see if I can't draw
the truth out of the Knight by a bottle. [*Aside.*]

Sir L U K E.

I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of
him that way. [*Aside.*]

SERJEANT.

I could not have thought it: why where the
deuce did you pick up all this? But by the bye,
pray who was the cryer?

Sir L U K E.

Did not you know her? Mrs. Simper, your
neighbour.

SERJEANT.

A pestilent jade! she's a good one I warrant.

Sir L U K E.

She is thought very pretty; what say you to
a glass in her favor?

SERJEANT.

By all means in the world! [*they drink*] and
that spark the clerk?

Sir L U K E.

Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you
toasted.

SERJEANT.

A friend! oh, ay—I understand you—come,
let us join 'em together.

Sir L U K E.

Alons. [*drink.*] Egad, I shall be caught in
my own trap, I begin to feel myself fluster'd
already. [*Aside.*]

SERJEANT.

Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better
every glass. [*Sings.*]

Drink and drive care away,
Drink and be merry.

Sir

64 THE LAME LOVER.

Sir L U K E.

True, my dear Serjeant—this is the searcher of secrets—the only key to the heart.

S E R J E A N T.

Right boy, in veritas vino.

Sir L U K E.

No deceit in a bumper. [*Sings.*] Drink and be merry.

S E R J E A N T.

Merry! dammee, what a sweet fellow you are; what would I give, to be half so jolly and [gay.

Sir L U K E.

[*Appearing very drunk.*] Would you? and yet do you know, Serjeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing has popp'd into my head, that distresses me very much.

S E R J E A N T.

Then drive it out with a bumper [*Drink.*] Well, how is it now.

Sir L U K E.

Now!—the matter is not mended at all.

S E R J E A N T.

What the deuce is the business that so sticks in your stomach.

Sir L U K E.

You know, my dear Serjeant, I am your friend, your real, your affectionate friend.

S E R J E A N T.

I believe, it Sir Luke.

Sir L U K E.

And yet, for these six months, I have conceal'd a secret, that touches you near, very near—

S E R J E A N T.

Me near! That was wrong, very wrong; friends should have all things in common.

THE LAME LOVER. 65

Sir L U K E.

That's what I said to myself; Sir Luke, says I, open your heart to your friend; but to tell you the truth, what sealed up my lips, was the fear that this secret should make you sulky and sad.

S E R J E A N T.

Me sulky and sad! ha! ha! how little you know of me.

Sir L U K E.

Swear then that you won't be uneasy.

S E R J E A N T.

Well, I do.

Sir L U K E.

[*Rising.*] Soft! let us see that all's safe;—well, Mr. Serjeant, do you know that you are—a fine, honest fellow?

S E R J E A N T.

Is that such a secret?

Sir L U K E.

Be quiet; a damn'd honest fellow—but as to your wife—

S E R J E A N T.

Well?

Sir L U K E.

She is an infamous strum—

S E R J E A N T.

How! it is a falsehood Sir Luke, my wife is as virtuous a wom—

Sir L U K E.

Oh! if you are angry, your servant—I thought that the news would have pleas'd you—for after all, what is the business to me? What do I get by the bargain?

S E R J E A N T.

That's true; but then would it not vex any man to hear his wife abus'd in such a—

Sir L U K E.

Not if it's true, you old fool.

K

S E R.

66 THE LAME LOVER.

S E R J E A N T.

I say it is false: prove it; give me that satisfaction Sir Luke.

Sir L U K E.

Oh! you shall have that pleasure directly; and to come at once to the point—you remember last New-year's day how severely it froze.

S E R J E A N T.

I do recollect.

Sir L U K E.

Very well; we are all invited to dine at Alderman Inkle's.

S E R J E A N T.

Very right.

Sir L U K E.

Well, and I did not go: Mrs. Circuit made me dine here, in this house—was it my fault?

S E R J E A N T.

No, no, Sir Luke, no.

Sir L U K E.

At table says she—she said, I was the picture of you—was it my fault?

S E R J E A N T.

Well, and suppose you are; where's the mischief in that?

Sir L U K E.

Be quiet, I tell you;—then throwing her arms round my neck,—it is my husband himself I embrace, it is my little old man that I kiss!—for she has a prodigious affection for you at bottom—was it my fault?

S E R J E A N T.

But what is there serious in this, dost think I mind such trifles?

Sir L U K E.

Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—then throwing her Teresa aside—upon my soul she is prodigious fine every where here—was it my fault?

THE LAME LOVER. 67

SERJEANT.

My fault! my fault! I see no fault in all this.

Sir LUKE.

[*Hatcbing a cry.*] No! why then my dear friend, do you know that I was so unworthy, so profligate, so abandon'd—as to—[*rises*] say no more, the business is done.

SERJEANT.

Ay, indeed!

Sir LUKE.

Oh! fact! there is not the least doubt of the matter; this is no *bear say*, dy'e see, I was by all the while.

SERJEANT.

Very pretty! very fine upon my word.

Sir LUKE.

Was it my fault? what could I do? put yourself in my place; I must have been more, or less, than man to resist.

SERJEANT.

Your fault, Sir Luke, no, no—you did but your duty—but as to my wife—

Sir LUKE.

She's a diabolical fiend, I shall hate her as long as I live.

SERJEANT.

And I too.

Sir LUKE.

Only think of her forcing me, as it were with a sword at my breast, to play such a trick; you, my dear Serjeant, the best, truest friend I have in the world. [Weeps.]

SERJEANT.

[Weeping.] Dry your tears, dear Sir Luke; I shall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence in trusting *me* with the secret—[*taking him forward.*] But I think it might be as well kept from the rest of the world,

68 THE L A M E L O V E R.

Sir L U K E.

My dear soul, do you think I would tell it to any mortal but *you*? No, no, not to my brother himself—You are the only man upon earth I wou'd trust.

S E R J E A N T.

Ten thousand thanks, my dear friend! sure there is no comfort, no balsam in life like a friend—but I shall make Madam Circuit remember—

Sir L U K E.

We neither of us ought to forgive her—were I you, I'd get a divorce.

S E R J E A N T.

So I will—provided you will promise not to marry her afur.

Sir L U K E.

Me! I'll sooner be torn to pieces by wild horses—no, my dear friend, we will retire to my house in the country together, and there, in innocence and simplicity, feeding our pigs and pigeons, like Pyramus and Thisbe, we will live the paragons of the age.

S E R J E A N T.

Agreed; we will be the whole earth to each other; for, as Mr. *Shakespur* says,

“The friend thou hast and his adoption try'd
“Clasp to thy soul, and quit the world beside.”—

Sir L U K E.

Zouns, here comes Madam Serjeant herself.

Enter Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Mrs C I R C U I T.

So, Gentlemen! a sweet tête à tête you have been holding—but I know it all, not a syllable you have said has been lost.

Sir L U K E.

Then, I hope you have been well entertained Mrs. Circuit?

THE LAME LOVER. 69

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

And you, you mean spirited, dastardly wretch, to lend a patient ear to his infamous, improbable tales, equally shameful both to you and me.

S E R J E A N T.

How Madam! have you the assurance—

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Yes, Sir, the assurance that innocence gives; there is not a soul, I thank heaven, that can lay the least soil, the least spot, on my virtue; nor is there a man on earth but yourself would have sat and silently listen'd to the fictions and fables of this intemperate sot.

S E R J E A N T.

Why to be sure the knight is overtaken a little; very near drunk.

Sir L U K E.

I hope he believes it is a lie. *[Aside.]*

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Do me instant justice on this defamer, this liar, or never more expect to see me in your house.

S E R J E A N T.

I begin to find out the fraud, this is all a sham of the knight's.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

I'll drive this instant to a friend of mine in the Commons, and see if no satisfaction can be had, for blasting the reputation of a woman like me—and hark you Sir, what inducement, what devil could prompt?—

S E R J E A N T.

Ay; what devil could prompt—

Sir L U K E.

Heyday!

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

But I guess at your motive; you flatter'd yourself

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yourself, that by marrying Charlot, and discarding of me you should engross all his affections and—

SERJEANT.

True, true—stop, my life, let me come at him, a little : hark you, Mr. Knight, I begin to discover that you are a very sad dog.

Sir LUKE.

Et tu Brute !

SERJEANT.

Brute !—you'll find I am not the brute you would have made me believe—I have consider'd both sides of the question.

Sir LUKE.

Both sides of the question?

SERJEANT.

Both: if your story is true, you are a scoundrel to debauch the wife of your friend ; and if it is false, you are an infamous liar.

Sir LUKE.

Well argued.

SERJEANT.

So in both cases, get out of my house.

Sir LUKE.

Nay, but Serjeant—

SERJEANT.

Troop I tell you, and never again enter these walls—you have libelled my wife, and I will see you no more.

Sir LUKE.

Was there ever such a—

SERJEANT.

March ! and as to my daughter, I would as soon marry her to a forma pauperis client.

[Exit Sir Luke.

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Do you consider, Mr. Circuit, where you are pushing the fellow ?—That chamber is Charlot's.

THE LAME LOVER. 71

Enter Sir LUKE, WOODFORD, CHARLOT, and JACK.

Sir LUKE.

Heyday! who the deuce have we here?—
Pray walk in, my good folks—your servant Miss
Charlot; your servant Mr. What-d'ye-call-um.
—Mr. Serjeant, you need not trouble yourself
to cater for Miss; your family you see can pro-
vide for themselves.

SERJEANT.

Heyday! What the deuce is all this! Who
are you Sir, and how came you here? [*To*
Woodford.]

JACK.

It was I, father, that brought him.

SERJEANT.

How, firrah!

Sir LUKE.

Well said my young limb of the law.

JACK.

Come, let us have none o'your—tho' I
brought Mr. Woodford, you could not persuade
me to do the same office for you—father, never
stir if he did not make me the proffer, if I would
let him into the house the night you was at
Kingston, of a new pair of silk stockings, and
to learn me a minuet.

Sir LUKE.

Me! I should never have got you to turn
out your toes.

JACK.

Ay, and moreover you made me push out
my chest, and do so with my fingers, as if I
was taking two pinches of snuff.

Sir LUKE.

You see, Mr. Serjeant, what a fondness, I
have for every twig of your family.

SER-

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SERJEANT.

I shall thank *you* hereafter—but from you, Charlot, I expected other guests—

CHARLOT.

When, Sir, you hear this whole matter explain'd, you will acquit I am sure.

WOODFORD.

Indeed, Sir, *I* am wholly to blame; my being here was as much a surprize upon Miss Charlot as—

SERJEANT.

But now you are here, pray what's your business?

JACK.

O! father, I can acquaint you with that—he wanted me to bring a love letter to Charlot, so I told him he might bring it himself, for that I would not do any such thing for never so much, for fear of offending of you.

SERJEANT.

You mended the matter indeed—but after all, who, and what are you?

JACK.

It's the young gentleman that lives over our heads, to whom Mr. Fairplay is guardian.

SERJEANT.

Who, Woodford?

JACK.

The same.

SERJEANT.

And are you, young man in, a situation to think of a wife?

WOODFORD.

I am flattered, Sir, that as *justice* is with me, I shall one day have no contemptible fortune to throw at her feet.

SERJEANT.

Justice is! What signifies justice?—Is the *law* with you, you fool?

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WOODFORD.

With your help, Sir, I should hope for their union, upon this occasion at least.

SERGEANT.

Well, Sir, I shall re-consider your papers, and, if there are probable grounds, I may be induc'd to hear your proposals.

WOODFORD.

Nay then, Sir, the recovering my paternal possessions makes me anxious indeed.—Could I hope that the young lady's good wish would attend me?

CHARLOT.

I have a father, and can have no will of my own.

Sir LUKE.

So then it seems poor Pil Garlick here is discarded at once.

SERGEANT.

Why, could you have the impudence, after what has happen'd, to hope that——

Mrs. CIRCUIT.

He has given wonderful proofs of his modesty.

Sir LUKE.

Be quiet, Mrs. Circuit.—Come, good folks, I will set all matters to rights in a minute; and first, Mr. Serjeant, it becomes me to tell you, that I never intended to marry your daughter.

SERGEANT.

How! never!

Sir LUKE.

Never. She is a fine girl I allow; but would it now, Mr. Serjeant, have been honest in me, to have robb'd the whole sex of my person, and confin'd my favors to her?

L

SER-

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SERJEANT.

How!

Sir L U K E.

No! I was struck with the immorality of the thing; and therefore to make it impossible that you should ever give me your daughter, I invented the story I told you concerning Mrs. Circuit and me.

SERJEANT.

How!

Sir L U K E.

Truth, upon my honour.—Your wife there will tell you the whole was a lye.

SERJEANT.

Nay, then indeed.—But with what face can I look up to my dear? I have injur'd her beyond the hopes of forgiveness.—Wou'd you, lovee, but pass an act of oblivion—

Sir L U K E.

See me here prostrate to implore your clemency in behalf of my friend.

Mrs. C I R C U I T.

Of that I can't determine directly.—But as you seem to have some sense of your guilt, I shall grant you a reprieve for the present; which contrition and amendment may, perhaps, in time swell into a pardon.

But if again offending you are caught,

SERJEANT.

Then let me suffer, dearee, as I ought.

F I N I S.

T H E
BANKRUPT.

A
C O M E D Y,
IN
T H R E E A C T S.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEARSLY, No. 46, near Serjeants-inn,
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



[Illegible text]

TO THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUIS OF GRANBY,

THE PATRON OF LETTERS,

THE HOPE AND ORNAMENT

OF HIS COUNTRY,

THIS COMEDY

IS DEDICATED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S MOST

DEVOTED AND OBLIGED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

SAMUEL FOOTE.



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P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. FOOTE.

FOR wit's keen satire, and this laughing stage,
What theme so faithful as a Bankrupt Age?
For not confin'd to commerce is the curse,
The head is near as empty as the purse;
Equally sunk, our credit and our wit,
Nor is the sage more solvent than the cit;
All these—but soft, ere thus abroad we roam,
Were it not prudent first to look at home?
You, gentle Sirs, have giv'n me credit long,
And took my word for many an idle song;
But if exhausted, I give notes to-day,—
For wit and humour, which I cannot pay.
I must turn Bankrupt too, and hop away.
Unless indeed, I modestly apply,
For leave to sell my works by lottery.
Tho' few will favour, where's no cash to fee'em,
Poor hopes, that way to part with my Museum:
My old friend, Smirk, indeed, may lend his aid,
And sell by auction all my stock in trade;
His placid features, and imploring eye,
May tempt perhaps the tardy town to buy;
His winning manner, and his soft address,
To other sales of mine have giv'n success;
But after all, my ever honour'd friends,
On you alone my fate this night depends;
I've fought some battles, gain'd some vict'ries here,
And little thought a culprit to appear
Before this house; but if resolv'd you go
To find me guilty, or to make me so,
To grant me neither wit, nor taste, nor sense,
Vain were my plea, and useless my defence.
But still, I will not steal, I will not beg,
Tho' I've a passport in this wooden leg.
But to my cot contentedly retire,
And stew my cabbage by my only fire;
Mean time, great Sirs, my sentence yet unknown,
E'en as your Justice be your candour steewn,
And when you touch my honour, don't forget your own.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir Robert Riscouter,		Mr. <i>Foote</i> .
Sir James Biddulph,		Mr. <i>Aickin</i> .
Pillage,	— —	Mr. <i>Palmer</i> .
Resource,	— —	Mr. <i>Fearon</i> .
Margin,	— —	Mr. <i>Baddeley</i> .
Robin,	— —	Mr. <i>Whitefield</i> .
Phelim O'Flam,	—	Mr. <i>Bannister</i> .
James,	— —	Mr. <i>R. Palmer</i> .
Sir Thomas Tradewell,		Mr. <i>Davis</i> .
Dingey,	— —	Mr. <i>Griffiths</i> .
Pepper,	— —	Mr. <i>Stephens</i> .
Plaister,	— —	Mr. <i>Jones</i> .
Rumour,	— —	Mr. <i>Lloyd</i> .
Clerk,	— —	Mr. <i>Walters</i> .

W O M E N.

Lady Riscouter,		Miss <i>Sherry</i> .
Lydia,	— —	Mrs. <i>Jewell</i> .
Lucy,	— —	Miss <i>Ambrose</i> .
Kitty,	— —	Miss <i>Platt</i> .

T H E

B A N K R U P T.

A C T I.

Enter ROBIN *and* KITTY, *meeting.*

R O B I N.

THIS letter and casket, with my master's most respectful compliments, you will, Kitty, with your own fair hands, deliver to Miss.

K I T T Y.

The Casket is heavy—I suppose, Mr. Robin, this is what my Lady calls the Purryfunalia?

R O B I N.

A small tribute, Madam, to adorn the bride on the happy occasion.

B

K I T T Y.

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KITTY.

What then, I suppose you look upon this marriage as good as concluded.

ROBIN.

Things are gone such a length, that not the least doubt can be made.

KITTY.

And yet between the cup and the lip,—you remember the proverb?

ROBIN.

One of the parties may die to be sure, otherwise I don't know how—

KITTY.

No?

ROBIN.

No: The young lady has not alter'd her mind?

KITTY.

Not to my knowledge.

ROBIN.

What, Sir Robert Riscouter, her father? these curmudgeonly cits regard no ties, no obligations when they have an higher interest in view. I suppose he has received larger proposals from some other party.

KITTY.

I have heard no such thing.

ROBIN.

Well then, I am sure no impediment can arise from our quarter. My master, Sir James Bid-
dolph,

THE BANKRUPT. 3

dulph, is too much a man of honour: besides, I know his whole soul is wrapt up in Miss Lydia.

K I T T Y.

He has given her pretty convincing proofs of his passion.

R O B I N.

What, I suppose the malicious mother-in-law, who, I know, hates Miss, and has a damn'd deal of art, in conjunction with Miss Lucy, that precious pledge of her former husband's affections, has contrived to throw some confounded rub in the way.

K I T T Y.

Bless me, Mr. Robin, I don't know what you mean, I am sure I said nothing at all.

R O B I N.

No?

K I T T Y.

No. But only that things which are not done, may perhaps never be done; there is nothing certain but death.

R O B I N.

Very moral, Miss Kitty,—(there is some mystery, if I could but get at it, but this slut is as cunning—I will have a trial, however) nay, for the matter of that, I can have, Mrs. Kitty, no interest at all in this match: there is so much confinement, and form, even in the most fashionable families, that a single service is best suited to me, especially too, that now I am got into most of the clubs: there is one circumstance I

B 2

shall

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shall most feelingly regret: That I own, will greatly touch me.

K I T T Y.

And pray, what may that be, Mr. Robin?

R O B I N.

Not living under the same roof with Miss Kitty. I made no doubt, Madam, but your fortunes would follow your mistress's, and, in that case, I thought to soften the rigours of my captivity, in your agreeable converse.

K I T T Y.

Really, Mr. Robin? Well, I protest, I did not.

R O B I N.

And when our mutual endeavours had procured for us a small independence, I flatter'd myself with gently sliding the down-hill of life, subject to no other will but Miss Kitty's.

K I T T Y.

What a difference between him, and the servants of this side the bar?—Really, Mr. Robin, you talk nearly as well as your master.

R O B I N.

And no wonder, Madam, since love, the same deity, inspires us both.

K I T T Y.

How quick you are in your rippartees, Mr. Robin? are you good at a riddle?

R O B I N.

If you mean the making them, no; it is too low a species of writing for me; for novels I have

THE BANKRUPT. 5

have now and then some dealings with Noble, and have by me a genteel comedy of one act, that is thought to have a good deal of merit.

K I T T Y.

And Pray when does it make its appearance?

R O B I N.

Why, faith, I don't know, all the managers are such scribblers, that they won't give a genius fair play, but engross the whole stage to themselves.

K I T T Y.

Very selfish, indeed. Well, Mr. Robin, though you won't make a riddle, I will, which, as my Lady expects me, you may study to expound by yourself. This match won't take place, and yet are none of the parties to blame; I may live in the same house with you, though I should leave my young Mistress's service, and the loss of my place may perhaps be the making of my fortune. So Adieu.

R O B I N.

Nay, but Miss Kitty, one word, if you please.

K I T T Y.

Not a syllable, go, and puzzle your brains. But take this, for your comfort, that if you cannot at present make out my meaning, a little time will fully explain it. *[Exit.]*

R O B I N.

So skittish and shy, Mrs. Pert! but if our next meeting don't bring forth this secret, you are no true chambermaid, nor I fit for a valet de chambre. All reserve amongst servants is flat treason

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treason against the community. Every well-disciplin'd domestic is bound in honour, however careful of his own, to reveal all family secrets, to the rest of the tribe. But I must brush off, for here comes my Lady. *[Exit.*

Enter Lady RISCOUNTER, *and* JAMES.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And he has promised that the paragraph shall appear in the paper this morning?

JAMES.

I am afraid, Madam, there is no doubt of his keeping his word.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Afraid! what a pusillanimous creature art thou?

JAMES.

As your Ladyship, by what means I know not, is acquainted with my veneration for Miss, you can't wonder at my feeling some compunction, in becoming an instrument to ruin her fame.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Why the fellow is a fool: don't you consider, that her ruin, as you call it, will be your rise?

JAMES.

Perhaps so, Madam, but how can I—

Lady RISCOUNTER.

You love Lydia, you say?

JAMES.

More than I have words to express.

Lady

THE BANKRUPT.

7

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And Sir James Biddulph you detest, as a successful rival, no doubt?

JAMES.

Except on that account, I have no reason.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And what better reason can any man have? don't you know, that the two great master passions that give birth to all that we do, is hatred and love?

JAMES.

Without doubt.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

The mind would stagnate without them; and are not you particularly fortunate, in being able, by one masterly stroke, to gratify both?

JAMES.

Were I indeed sure of succeeding with Miss?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

You have every probable chance in your favour: in the first place, it is impossible, consistently with his honour, that Sir James Biddulph can pursue his designs upon Lydia.

JAMES.

May be not.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Nor will any proper suitable person think of her when her reputation is gone.

JAMES.

Too true, I believe.

LADY

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Lady RISCOUNTER.

Then, who so likely to succeed as yourself? as you are the party suspected, common policy will point out you for her husband.

JAMES.

But will Miss Lydia be brought to submit?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

She can have no choice but her father's. Him, I can easily manage, and possibly, as a douceur, prevail on him to augment the very considerable fortune she derives from her aunt; never fear, things are in a very good way.

JAMES.

I must submit all to your ladyship's management.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Your part will be easy enough, you will have nothing to do but be passive.

Enter KITTY, and LUCY, with a newspaper in her hand

LUCY.

Here, Madam, here it is, and placed in a most conspicuous part of the paper.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And no alteration?

LUCY.

Not a word. In the exact form that we sent it.

Lady

THE BANKRUPT. 9

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Pr'ythee read it, my dear.

LUCY.

[*Reads.*] “ We can assure the publick, from
“ the very best authority, that the beautiful
“ daughter, by a former venture, of an emi-
“ nent banker, not far from the Monument,
“ was surpris'd by the servants, in a most criti-
“ tical situation, with Mr. J——s, clerk to her
“ father.”

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Right, right.

LUCY.

“ And what heightens her crime, she was on
“ the eve of being married to an amiable young
“ baronet, at the well end of the town, the ap-
“ parent object of her own choice.”

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Finely circumstantial, it is impossible for any
body to err in the person.

LUCY.

Not in nature ; now, I think, we shall pull
down Miss Prudery's pride.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

It cannot fail. Kitty, you have carefully pe-
rused the instructions I gave you.

KITTY.

Please your ladyship, I have them by heart.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Don't be too forward in replying to any ques-
tion they put to you ; but answer with a kind of
C reluctant

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reluctant hesitation, as if the facts were forc'd from your mouth.

K I T T Y.

Never fear, Madam.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Don't forget to make frequent professions of the great love and affection you bear your young mistress, that you could not have thought it, shan't know whom to trust for the future ; ready to lay down your life for your lady.

L U C Y.

Suggest too, that some strange arts must have been used, or you are convinc'd she could never have been brought to submit.

K I T T Y.

I shall carefully, Madam, obey your directions.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And squeeze out a tear now and then, if you can.

L U C Y.

Or, if they won't come, rub your eyes till they are red.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Right ; this will give probability to all that you say.

L U C Y.

Otherwise, the young hypocrite's behaviour has been always so specious, those who know her won't credit the story.

K I T T Y.

THE BANKRUPT. II

KITTY.

Suppose, Madam, Sir James Biddulph, or any body else, should make any enquiry.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Answer none of their questions; your tenderness for Lydia will be a proper excuse; to your master's authority, indeed, you are obliged to submit. You comprehend me?

KITTY.

Perfectly, Madam.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Within, I will give you further instructions; and remember, Kitty, your fortune is at stake: Success, in this one instance, will make you easy for life.

KITTY.

The best I can do will be but a poor return for your ladyship's goodness.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Send the news-paper in to your master. [*Exit Kitty.*] You have, James, seen none of our people this morning.

JAMES.

I have not enter'd the shop.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Then get out of the way as fast as you can; secrete yourself somewhere, that will give additional strength to the story. Your withdrawing will argue a consciousness arising from guilt.

C 2

JAMES.

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JAMES.

That I most sufficiently feel.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Success will soon drown the remembrance.
[Exit James.] That fellow must not appear;
his mind is so maukish, that, should he be confronted with Lydia, he would betray our whole plot in an instant.

LUCY.

It is a wonder, Madam, how have you got all this address: instead of a private family, you are form'd to govern a country.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Why, I think, I may without vanity say, that I deriv'd from nature some talents for this kind of intrigue; but to the care of my education I chiefly owe what I am.

LUCY.

Indeed, Madam!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

My father was a stock-broker, you know, and your father, my first husband, an attorney, my dear.

LUCY.

True, Madam.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And as they had no reserve, they kept no secrets from me, I must have been a blockhead, indeed, not to have made some progress in their professional arts.

LUCY.

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LUCY.

True, Madam.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

But after defeating Sir James Biddulph's designs upon Lydia, to turn the tide of his affections, and substitute you in her room, will, Lucy, be the great political effort.

LUCY.

From your ladyship's great abilities there cannot be the least doubt of success: besides, her father is so hasty and violent that, I am sure, he will never be brought to forgive her.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

There is no relying on that; no mortal was ever so mutable. Our various climate is not so inconstant as he. Sir Robert is choleric enough, but then, as he is provoked without cause, he is appeased without reason; one word will inflame, another extinguish the fire; whom one minute he persecutes, the next he protects. His joy, grief, love, hatred, are in eternal rotation, and I have been often tempted to think his mind a machine, moved only by the immediate objects before it.

LUCY.

And yet, Madam, how compleatly you rule him!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

No longer, child, than I stay by his side; after that, the first person has him that sees him, and all my impressions are effac'd in an instant.

Enter

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Enter KITTY.

KITTY.

My master has got at the paragraph.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Has he so? well, and—

KITTY.

He enquired, Madam, for you, and putting his finger here, bid me shew this directly to your ladyship.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

He did not suspect then that I had seen it before?

KITTY.

Not in the least—but here he comes, tottering and trembling—with his face as white as a sheet.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Get you behind.

Enter Sir ROBERT RISCOUNTER.

Sir ROBERT.

Well, my dear, have you read——

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Sir Robert, I have.

Sir ROBERT.

Have you so? Well, and pray what do you think? Did you ever see such an audacious, abominable, impudent, scandalous piece of scurrility? Zounds, give me my cane, I will go directly to the rascally printer's, and——

THE BANKRUPT. 15

Lady RISCOUNTER.

But suppose, Sir Robert, the printer should not be passive, and, in return for the strokes of your cane, should leave the marks of his nails in your face.

Sir ROBERT.

There may be something in that, as your ladyship says, I have heard some of the rogues are strong and sturdy enough.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And, first, let us be sure who the party is the paragraph points at.

Sir ROBERT.

Hey! what d'ye say? points at? why, it is as clear as the sun—*[takes the paper]*—banker—Monument—first venture—zounds, they might as well have published my name, and my daughter's, at length.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Why, to say truth, the marks are pretty strong; but still let us coolly consider the case. Kitty, go down; Lucy, my dear, leave Sir Robert and me together a little.

[Exit Lucy and Kitty.]

Sir ROBERT.

Ay, go, child, pr'ythee go. I don't believe, Lady Riscounter, that there is a single man in the Ward, who would have the least hesitation in pronouncing who was—

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Well, but don't let us be in such hurry to make the application ourselves; the malice of others will

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will be ready enough to do that : let me see, is there no other banker lives near the Monument?

Sir ROBERT.

Not that I know ; but suppose there should, here, the west end of the town, and the amiable baronet, puts the matter out of dispute : hey, what d'ye say ?—

Lady RISCOUNTER.

That, indeed ; but, hold a little, does not it mention the name of the paramour ? Ay, here it is, J—S.

Sir ROBERT.

J—s.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

J—s, I don't recollect any body that visits here, whose name those letters will suit.

Sir ROBERT.

There is no Jones, nor Joddrell—poo, pox, that is an L—nor Jennings, nor Jarvis, nor Jenkins, nor——

Lady RISCOONTER.

Not that I recollect.

Sir ROBERT.

There is Jacobs the Jew, but he is as old as one of the patriarchs, with his beard down to his breeches ; they can never mean him.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Poo ! that is too absurd to suppose : but stay, are there no other distinguishing marks ? um, um—— “ J—s, clerk of her father's,” I own that passage escaped me.

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

Hey! what did you say? and me too, one of my clerks! who can that be? J—s, the two letters belonging to a surname.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

So I should imagine.

Sir ROBERT.

Zounds! it can never be James.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

James!

Sir ROBERT.

An impudent, eternal, damn'd son of a bitch! this is the consequence of taking beggars into your bosom.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

But, Sir Robert——

Sir ROBERT.

Don't mention it, Madam; was not he the thirteenth son of a starv'd curate in Essex, ragged as their colts, and knew about as much as one of their calves—did not I feed, cloath, take him into my house, treat him as if he had been——and, in return, the villain to dishonour my child!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

You are too impatient, Sir Robert; why should you fix all at once upon James? I have observed the lad's behaviour to be discreet and modest; nay, indeed, rather shy and reserv'd.

Sir ROBERT.

That is true enough, I must own. I never
D remark'd

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remark'd the boy to be presumptuous and forward, like some of our pert prigs of the city, but, as your ladyship observes, rather bashful and shy. No, no, it can never be him.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Not but I have known people with that specious outside appearance, carry minds as malignant and daring——

Sir ROBERT.

The curfedeft fly dogs upon earth : hypocrisy is the finest veil for a villain. I always suspected there was something bad behind his solemn sanctified look : I don't believe the scoundrel ever swore an oath since he came into the house. There is a villain for you, my dear.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Nay, but my dear, let us conclude nothing rashly. Suppose you send for James up, and sift him a little ?

Sir ROBERT.

That mayn't be amiss—who's there ?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Not that I believe he will be ever brought to confess.

Sir ROBERT.

He ! no, no, curse him. Him ! you will never catch him at that : you might as well hope to extract sugar from salt. I may as well let him alone.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Let us see him however.

Enter

THE BANKRUPT. 19

Enter a Servant.

Sir ROBERT.

True. Let James know that I want him, but don't tell the fellow I am angry, and so get him to skulk out of the way.

SERVANT.

I did not know that your worship was angry, 'till you told me your——

Sir ROBERT.

I tell you! my dear, did I say any such thing? you prying, impertinent——Go, and do as you are bid. *[Exit Servant.]*

Lady RISCOUNTER.

I don't think it unlikely, Sir Robert, but some idle acquaintance, without considering the consequences, may have inserted this malicious article, by way of pleasantry, as a kind of jest upon James.

Sir ROBERT.

Nothing so probable, Lady Riscounter: this town swarms with such forward, frivolous puppies.

Enter Servant.

Well, where is James?

SERVANT.

Sir, he is not within.

Sir ROBERT.

What, is the rascal run off?

D 2

Lady

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Lady RISCOUNTER.

No, my dear, perhaps only gone out with some bills for acceptance.

Sir ROBERT.

Like enough. When will he be back?

SERVANT.

The rest of the clerks have not seen him to-day.

Sir ROBERT.

Not seen him to-day? what, are all of them blind then?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Nay, Sir Robert, perhaps he has not been in the shop.

SERVANT.

So they say.

[Exit.

Sir ROBERT.

Then they could not see him, indeed. Not in the shop! nay, then the business is clear; guilt, guilt, flight is full as bad as confession.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

It does look suspicious, I own; but then nothing ill can happen without your daughter's concurrence, and you have not the least doubt of her.

Sir ROBERT.

Doubt! hey!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And, in fact, have nothing to fear.

Sir

THE BANKRUPT. 21

Sir ROBERT.

Fear! doubt! I hope your Ladyship has no more doubts than myself.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Why should I? how does this affair concern me?

Sir ROBERT.

As it concerns me, Lady Riscounter; do you suppose I should have been indifferent, if such a charge had fallen on Lucy?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Such a charge can never fall upon my daughter Lucy.

Sir ROBERT.

Full as soon as on my daughter Lydia.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

I am not, Sir Robert, so certain of that.

Sir ROBERT.

Lady Riscounter, you begin to alarm me; you know more of this matter, than you are willing to own.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Whatever I know, Sir Robert, I am resolved not to communicate.

Sir ROBERT.

And why not?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Whatever a mother-in-law says, the good-natured world always imputes to malice.

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

Generally the case, I must own. But to me you may, nay, you ought to reveal.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Since you are so earnest, I own some rumours have reach'd me.

Sir ROBERT.

Of what kind?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

You will pardon me there: if you will examine your daughter's maid, Kitty; she, I am told, can satisfy all your enquiries.

Sir ROBERT.

An artful baggage, I know. For heaven's sake, my dear, send her hither directly.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

But not the least mention of me. [*Exit.*]

Sir ROBERT.

Very well. I never observ'd the least correspondence between Lydia and James; but what of that? they would take good care, I warrant, to conceal it from me.

Enter KITTY.

So, I find you were the go-between, the little infamous agent in this curs'd——

KITTY

Sir Robert—

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

You must have been a volunteer; I am sure, James was not able to bribe you, for he is as poor as a pillag'd black in Bengal.

KITTY.

Really, Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir ROBERT.

You mean, hussy, you won't: Come, you may as well tell me all the particulars concerning Lydia and James; with the main article, you see I am already acquainted.

KITTY.

Don't press me, pray Sir; I would rather die than say any thing to hurt my young mistress. [*cries.*]

Sir ROBERT.

Nay, pr'ythee, Kitty, don't cry, you are a good girl, and love my daughter, I see.

KITTY.

And not without reason, for she has been the kindest, best——

Sir ROBERT.

Nay, till now, she was ever an amiable girl; but here, child, you will do her a capital service.

KITTY.

Indeed, Sir.

Sir ROBERT.

For if her affections are fix'd upon James, tho' I may lament, I shall not oppose him.

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K I T T Y.

Since that is the case, I can't say, but early one morning, hearing a noise in Miss Lydia's apartment, I stepp'd down to see what was the matter.

Sir R O B E R T.

Well?

K I T T Y.

Just as I got to the foot of the stairs, her door open'd, and out came Mr. James.

Sir R O B E R T.

Did he? and why did not you alarm the house and seize the villain directly?

K I T T Y.

That, Sir, would have ruined my Lady's reputation at once.

Sir R O B E R T.

True enough, you did wisely. Did the fellow perceive you?

K I T T Y.

Yes, Sir, and made me a sign to be silent.

Sir R O B E R T.

I don't doubt it.

K I T T Y.

Indeed, he came to me two hours after, told me he had a passion for Miss, never could get an opportunity of disclosing his mind, and desperate, at finding his hopes on the point of being ruin'd, he had stolen that morning into her chamber, humbly to implore her compassion and pity.

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

He chose a fine time and place for the purpose.

KITTY.

On his knees he desired, I would not disclose to any mortal what I had seen.

Sir ROBERT.

Which you should not have done.

KITTY.

He was too late in his caution; not five minutes before I had told it to Mrs. Hemshot, Miss Lucy's maid.

Sir ROBERT.

No wonder then the story is public.

KITTY.

I am certain sure, my young Mistress is innocent, for Mr. James vowed and declar'd he was all upon honour.

Sir ROBERT.

The malice of mankind will never be brought to believe it; you may go. [*Exit Kitty.*] So the girl's reputation is gone, and a retreat from the world the only choice that is left her: all my calamities are come upon me at once; my child ruin'd, and from the general distress, my own fame and fortune on the brink of destruction: the attorney and broker will be instantly here to contrive means for propping my tottering credit. Am I in a condition to think of expedients, or to listen to—

E

Enter

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Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

A card, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Sir ROBERT.

Reads.] “ Sir James Biddulph’s compliments
 “ to Sir Robert Riscouter, and if convenient
 “ will take the liberty to wait on him this morn-
 “ ing.” Prepar’d, as I expected, our misfor-
 tunes have reach’d him, and he comes to break
 off the match; he is not to be blam’d. This
 rash, inconsiderate—I’ll to her, and if she has the
 least atom of feeling, I’ll—And yet, how could
 the poor girl help his intrusion? she might be
 ignorant, and yet the fellow without encourage-
 ment, would never have dared to—Yet the
 impudence of some men is amazing, and so in-
 deed is the folly of women: the original fault
 must be his. But her after-compliance makes
 her equally guilty, for had she disapprov’d, she
 would have reveal’d the fact to her mother or me.
 That, that, condemns her at once; I will to her
 directly, and find out the full extent of her guilt.

[*Exit.*

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

Miss LUCY and Miss LYDIA discovered.

LUCY.

TO us, indeed, who are encumber'd with fathers and mothers, marriage is a convenient business enough.

LYDIA.

And why on that account, my dear Lucy?

LUCY.

As it makes one the entire mistress of one's time, and one is accountable to no mortal for what one says or does.

LYDIA.

What Lucy, not to your husband?

LUCY.

Nay, don't be prudish, my dear: you are going back to the days of Queen Bess; who talks now of obedience and duty? ridiculous! her majesty's old fardingale is not more out of fashion.

LYDIA.

No!

LUCY.

No: one reads in books, indeed, of nuptial ties and conjugal love; mere obsolete stuff! modern marriages are mere matters of interest.

LYDIA.

Interest!

E 2

LUCY.

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LUCY.

Ay, child; for instance now, Sir Thomas Perkins, our neighbour, finding that Miss Williams has a good parcel of land, which being contiguous to his estate, will be very proper for him to possess; immediately sends his rent-roll a-courting to her's. The parchments are produc'd on both sides, and no impediments, that is incumbrance appearing, a couple of lawyers marry the manors together.

LYDIA.

Without the last regard to the persons.

LUCY.

Poo, persons! they are consider'd, child, as mansion-houses upon the estates, which one lives in, or neglects, just as they happen to be convenient, or not.

LYDIA.

But suppose Lucy, as in mine, there should happen to be no land in the case.

LUCY.

Then, child, the bargain is alter'd: you deposit so much money, and he grants you such an annuity; a mere Smithfield bargain, that is all.

LYDIA.

A pretty picture you give me of marriage. But this is all raillery, Lucy; I am sure you would never submit to this barter and sale.

LUCY.

I should do like the rest of the world. We must take things as we find them. You are not

so foolish as to be fond of Sir James Biddulph, my dear.

LYDIA.

Fond? the expression is strong; you must imagine I prefer him to the rest of—

LUCY.

Why, as to his appearance, it must be own'd, that the mansion is a pretty modern structure enough, well built, and prettily finish'd: I can't indeed say his upper story is furnished quite to my taste.

LYDIA.

Nay, Lucy, now you are unjust, the whole world concur in giving him sense.

LUCY.

Nay, that article is not very material. If I had him, that is a part of his house, with which I should hold very little communication, my dear. But however, you love him.

LYDIA.

Or I am sure I never would have him.

LUCY.

And, I suppose, if any accident was to break off this match, it would make you very unhappy.

LYDIA.

Can you doubt it, my dear?

LUCY.

There is one evil that attends these ridiculous contracts.

LYDIA.

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LYDIA.

You don't look upon love then as an essential ingredient?

LUCY.

Ha! ha! ha! silly and singular; do you know, Lydia, why Love is always painted as blind?

LYDIA.

There are many causes assigned by the poets.

LUCY.

But not one has given the true one: because the little rogue shuts our eyes to our interests.

LYDIA.

Fye, Lucy, where could you get these narrow and libertine notions?

LUCY.

A little more experience will tell you. But here comes Sir Robert, not a word of what has pass'd.

LYDIA.

I shall, my dear Lucy, for your sake, endeavour to forget all you have said.

Enter Sir ROBERT RISCOUNTER.

Sir ROBERT.

Lucy, you may go down. [*Exit Lucy.*] After what has pass'd, you will not be surpriz'd that I insist upon your immediately quitting my house!

LYDIA.

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LYDIA.

Quitting the house, Sir!

Sir ROBERT.

Your fortune is independant and large; you will no doubt be happy in escaping from the observing eye of a father.—I will be cool, and desire only an answer to a very few questions. Since the death of your mother (who is happy in having escap'd the knowledge of this infamous business) have I been ever wanting in any act of paternal affection?

LYDIA.

For Heaven's sake, Sir, what can be the meaning of——

Sir ROBERT.

Come, no evasions, but answer briefly, yes, or no, to my questions.

LYDIA.

No, Sir.

Sir ROBERT.

After my first care to educate you fit for the world, has it not been my principal study to settle you properly in it?

LYDIA:

Most assuredly, Sir.

Sir ROBERT.

And knowing to what temptations girls at your age are expos'd, did I not seek out a man of rank, honour, and fortune, to be your protector, and guardian for life?

LYDIA.

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LYDIA.

I confess it.

Sir ROBERT.

Did you ever express the least dislike to Sir James Biddulph's address?

LYDIA.

Never.

Sir ROBERT.

How could you then so far forget what you owe to me, and yourself, as privately to harbour and encourage a passion—

LYDIA.

I am confounded.

Sir ROBERT.

For an object too unsuitable in every respect : for a mere creature of charity?

LYDIA.

Charity!

Sir ROBERT.

Ay, for it was compassion to the father's numerous family that induced me to take James into my house.

LYDIA.

James! what of him? or what relation, Sir, can he have to me?

Sir ROBERT.

This is astonishing in a girl of her years. What then, you know nothing of this fellow's affections?

LYDIA.

LYDIA.

For me?

Sir ROBERT.

Ay, for you. No billet-doux, no private meetings, no stealing into your chamber before the servants were out of their beds.

LYDIA.

Amazing! and who, Sir, has dared to insinuate—

Sir ROBERT.

Insinuate! why the tale is the talk of the town: all the morning papers are full on't.

LYDIA.

What can, Sir, be the meaning of this? is it possible you can think, Sir, your daughter so abandoned, so lost——

Sir ROBERT.

Hey!

LYDIA.

Recollect, dear Sir, I beseech you, have I in the whole course of my life, ever once dared to deceive you?

Sir ROBERT.

Why, Child, I can't say that you have. But in this case, there is such positive proof.

F

LYDIA.

LYDIA.

Of what kind, I beseech you?

Sir ROBERT.

Facts, facts, well attested; so don't pretend to deny.

LYDIA.

Attested! by whom?

Sir ROBERT.

Their names are needless at present. But what motive or interest could any one have to invent, or propagate.

LYDIA.

None, that I can discover; but, however strong the appearance, if either in thought, word, or deed, there has any thing, either criminal or culpable, passed between me and——

Sir ROBERT.

What, no declarations? no interviews?

LYDIA.

No more than with any other man in your service.

Sir ROBERT.

Astonishing!

LYDIA.

If the contrary can be made to appear, abandon me, Sir, at once to that world, already so prepossess'd to my prejudice, the greatest misfortune that can ever befall me.

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

Well, Child, rise ; I can't help giving credit to what you aver. But how to persuade the rest of—

Enter A SERVANT

Somebody wants me? as I expected. Sir James Biddulph I reckon.

SERVANT.

No, Sir, a couple of gentlemen, who say they came by appointment.

Sir ROBERT.

I guess who they are. Another bad business. Shew them into the parlour. [*Exit Servant.*] You don't know half your father's afflictions—go, child, go into your chamber.

LYDIA.

I hope my father believes me.

Sir ROBERT.

I do, I do. As soon as I have dispatch'd these gentlemen, I will see you again. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE.

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SCENE, *A Parlour.*

Enter PILLAGE *and* RESOURCE.

PILLAGE.

Ay, take my word for it, Mr. Resource, in the whole round of the law, and, thank Heaven, the dominions are pretty extensive, there is not a nicer road to hit than the region of Bankrupts.

RESOURCE.

I should have thought it a turnpike, for you see how easily even a country Attorney can find it.

PILLAGE.

Pshaw, what amongst manufacturers, and meagre mechanicks? fellows not worth powder and shot; and yet these paltry Provincials, master Resource, are often obliged to solicit my aid.

RESOURCE.

Indeed!

PILLAGE.

Why, t'other day, a poor dog, over head and ears, in debt from the country, was recommended to me, by a client; the fellow had scrap'd together all he could get, and came up to town, with a view of running beyond sea, but I stopp'd him directly.

RESOURCE.

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RESOURCE.

Really !

PILLAGE.

O, ay, in a couple of months wash'd him as white as a sheep that is just shorn.

RESOURCE.

How did you bring it about ?

PILLAGE.

Easy enough. Made him take a house in Cheapside, call'd him a citizen, in the London Gazette, and his name of John Madge, (being as common as carrots) not a soul in the country suspected that it was he.

RESOURCE.

How should they ?

PILLAGE.

Pass'd a few necessary notes to get him number and value, white-wash'd him, and sent him home to his wife.

RESOURCE.

Cleanly and cleverly done.

PILLAGE;

When the country chaps brought in their bills, he drew out of his pocket a certificate, and gave them a receipt in full for all their demands,

RESOURCE.

How the loobies must look,

PILLAGE.

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PILLAGE.

Chop-fallen, no doubt: but he is in business again.

RESOURCE.

He is?

PILLAGE.

O yes, and I hear does very well. For I left him two hundred out of the six he brought with him, to begin the world with credit afresh.

RESOURCE.

Very generous indeed, Mr. Pillage.

PILLAGE.

O! a trifling affair, got little by it!—for the matter of that, a mere statute is not much in itself.

RESOURCE.

Ay! Well I thought it brought pretty perquisites with it.

PILLAGE.

No, no; it is a good hot-bed indeed to raise chancery suits in.

RESOURCE.

Ay, that is a produce that deserves propagation.

PILLAGE.

What, I see you have found a remedy for master Monk of the Minorities? I thought his was an incurable case.

RESOURCE.

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RESOURCE.

Only skinn'd o'er the fore, master Pillage, it will soon break out again.

PILLAGE.

What were the means that you used?

RESOURCE.

Got some friends of mine to advance him cash on a project.

PILLAGE.

Of what kind?

RESOURCE.

A scheme of his, to monopolize sprats and potatoes.

PILLAGE.

And it took?

RESOURCE.

Oh! there was no danger of that. The people of this country are always ready to bite at a bubble.

PILLAGE.

Will it hold?

RESOURCE.

Pshaw! We shall break before the season for sprats, and as to the Potatoes, we had laid in a ship load or two.

PILLAGE.

For which you procured a good price?

RESOURCE.

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RESOURCE.

Not a fouse. They are all now in our cellars in Southwark, and have shot out branches as tall as the trees in the Park.

PILLAGE.

Ha! ha! ha! but apropos, can you guess Sir Robert's business with us?

RESOURCE.

Very near, I believe.

PILLAGE.

What, the house is not a tumbling?

RESOURCE.

A pretty large crack.

PILLAGE.

Which he wants our assistance to plaister. Why, I thought the knight was as firm as a rock.

RESOURCE.

I knew better things. I saw the mansion was daily decaying. Hush, here he comes.

Enter Sir ROBERT, followed by a Clerk.

Sir ROBERT.

As we have effects in our hands, accept the bills to be sure. But how to discharge them when they are due.—So, gentlemen, I have sent for you to beg your assistance.

PILLAGE.

PILLAGE.

Sir Robert, we shall be very happy to serve you, if you will tell us but how.

Sir ROBERT.

Why, to deal plainly, gentlemen, my affairs are come to a crisis, and without some substantial and speedy assistance, my credit will quickly expire.

PILLAGE.

You surprize me : I never guess'd it in danger. Pray, Sir Robert, what brought on the disease, was it an alley fever, or a gradual decay ?

Sir ROBERT.

A complication of causes. Not but I could have weather'd them all, had the house in Holland but stood, their failure must be followed by mine.

PILLAGE.

What, Van Swieten's ?

Sir ROBERT.

Have you heard any thing of him to-day ?

PILLAGE.

No doubt, I believe, of their stopping ; their bills were offer'd at Garraway's under forty per cent. As your name is not blown upon yet, suppose you coin a couple of quires ! don't you think the circulation might serve you ?

Sir ROBERT.

No, that mint is exhausted, and private paper return'd to its primitive value. My real case

G

can

42 THE BANKRUPT.

can be no longer conceal'd. I must stop, and should be glad of your advice how to manage the matter.

PILLAGE.

There are two methods in use. The choice will depend on how your affairs stand with the world.

Sir ROBERT.

Bitter bad, Mr. Pillage.

PILLAGE.

I guess'd as much, by your sending for us. They treat us, Master Resource, like a couple of quacks, never apply but in desperate cases.

RESOURCE.

But in all diseases there are different degrees.

PILLAGE.

True; for instance, if you find you are pretty near on a par, with perhaps a small balance per contra, summon your creditors, lay your conditions fully before them, convince them you have a fund to answer all their demands, and crave a respite for three or four years.

Sir ROBERT.

Just to call in my debts, and make the most of my other effects?

RESOURCE.

True; as the English merchants have a good deal of milk in their blood, that is a favour rarely refused.

T H E B A N K R U P T. 43

Sir R O B E R T.

This, Master Pillage, will be only deferring the evil.

P I L L A G E.

That is, Sir Robert, as you manage the cards. Don't you see that the length of time, with the want or wish of ready money for trade, will dispose the bulk of your creditors to sell their debts at a loss of thirty or forty per cent?

Sir R O B E R T.

True.

R E S O U R C E.

No contemptible sum, when a man's dealings are large.

Sir R O B E R T.

But how shall I profit by—

P I L L A G E.

What hinders you from privately buying the debts?

Sir R O B E R T.

That, indeed—

R E S O U R C E.

A fine fortune sav'd out of the fire.

P I L L A G E.

True. And now we talk of the fire, for a present supply, you may burn a warehouse or two, after it has been gutted of all its contents.

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RESOURCE.

And recover the full amount of the policy.

PILLAGE.

Did you never try that?

RESOURCE.

No, I don't think he has done any thing in the fire way yet; have you, Sir Robert?

Sir ROBERT.

Never once came into my head.

PILLAGE.

May be not; oh! for a fertile brain, there are many means to be used; but what d'ye say to my plan?

Sir ROBERT.

What, the summoning scheme? I am so involved, that I am afraid that project will never prevail.

PILLAGE.

Then you have nothing left but a statute.

Sir ROBERT.

But if my certificate should not be granted?

PILLAGE.

That is my proper business, Sir Robert. If we find your creditors inclined to be crusty, there will be no difficulty in creating demands to get number and value.

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

That will swell my debts to a monstrous amount.

RESOURCE.

So much the more for your honour; consider you are a knight, and your dignity demands you should fail for a capital sum.

Sir ROBERT.

Does it?

PILLAGE.

To be sure. Why, you would not sneak into the Gazette like a Birmingham button-maker.

RESOURCE.

Oh fie!

PILLAGE.

He would never after be able to shew his head upon Change.

RESOURCE.

Never, never.

PILLAGE.

And then, you know, what with the portable stuff, such as jewels, or cash, that he himself may secrete, and the dividends that fall to the share of his friends, which they will doubtless restore—

RESOURCE.

He will be fit to begin the world again with *eclat*.

PIL-

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PILLAGE.

In a much better condition than ever.

RESOURCE.

And his children's children will have reason to thank him.

Sir ROBERT.

But is there not some danger in concealing the portable stuff, as you call it?

PILLAGE.

Not in the least. Besides, to colour the business, you may collect a purse of light guineas, with an old batter'd family watch, and deliver them to the commissioners, on your first examination.

RESOURCE.

That will give an air of integrity.

Sir ROBERT.

You seem to think, then, Gentlemen, that it is the duty of every honest merchant to break once at least in his life, for the good of his family?

RESOURCE.

Not the least question of that.

PILLAGE.

Every day's practice confirms it. Well, Sir Robert, when shall I provide you the tackle?

Sir ROBERT.

The tackle!

PIL-

PILLAGE.

In about a month or six weeks, I think, you may be made fit to appear in the papers.

Sir ROBERT.

In the Gazette, as a bankrupt?

RESOURCE.

Aye, but then no time must be lost.

PILLAGE.

Not a moment, for should they smoke his design—

Sir ROBERT.

Gentlemen, I must decline your assistance.

PILLAGE.

How?

Sir ROBERT.

For, without considering the private injury I may do to particular persons, this mischievous method must soon affect the whole mercantile world.

PILLAGE.

Why, what has that—

Sir ROBERT.

Mutual confidence is the very cement of commerce. That weaken'd, the whole structure must fall to the ground.

RESOURCE.

Hey!

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

From the practice of these infamous arts, as it is impossible they can be conceal'd, what suspicions, what jealousies must every man in trade entertain?

PILLAGE.

How!

Sir ROBERT.

What an injury besides, to those in my unhappy condition? the risques and losses unavoidably connected with commerce, procure the unsuccessful trader, generally the compassion, sometimes the friendly aid, of those of his order.

RESOURCE.

We know that well enough.

Sir ROBERT.

But when bankruptcy becomes a lucrative traffic, and men are found to fail with a view of making their fortunes, the unhappy and fraudulent will be confounded together, and punishment fall on his head, who has a title to pity.

PILLAGE.

The man's mad.

Sir ROBERT.

Perhaps I myself am a sacrifice to those very arts you have recommended so warmly. But there the mischief shall end. Men may suffer from my calamities, but they never shall by my crimes.

[Exit.]

PIL-

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PILLAGE.

Did you ever meet with such a squeamish old fool? what could he mean by sending for us?

RESOURCE.

Who can tell? his head's turn'd, I suppose.

PILLAGE.

I thought we had him sure; but how nimbly he has slipp'd through our fingers!

RESOURCE.

Necessity will soon bring him back to our hook. He is shy for the present, but I warrant he will bite bye and bye.

PILLAGE.

Or we shall lose a capital prize.

RESOURCE.

Indeed, should his friends interpose, and matters be compounded without us.

PILLAGE.

That I have a sure way to prevent. Before an hour is past, I will tear such a rent in his robe, as I defy all the botchers in Europe to mend.

RESOURCE.

By what means?

PILLAGE.

I know he is in the receipt of some government money; I will take care to saddle him with an extent.

RESOURCE.

That will do.

H

PIL-

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PILLAGE.

I shall only just go and take out a commission against five macaronies, who are joint annuitants to a couple of Jews.

RESOURCE.

But how can you lug them into a statute? they are no dealers, you know.

PILLAGE.

No, dealers? yes, but they are.

RESOURCE.

Aye, of what kind?

PILLAGE.

Why, why they are dealers of cards [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady RISCOUNTER, and Sir JAMES BIDDULPH.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

If you will walk in, Sir James, Sir Robert is a little busy at present, but he will wait upon you directly.

Sir JAMES.

I have no call, Madam, that prevents my attending his leisure.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

I fear the design of this visit, Sir James, is of a different nature from those we have lately receiv'd.

Sir JAMES.

I came, Madam, to offer my aid in detecting
and

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and punishing an infamous calumny that has made its way to the publick, this morning.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

But reports of this kind, when despised and neglected, gradually die of themselves. It is a most unlucky affair, I confess.

Sir JAMES.

Unlucky! most false and atrocious: I hope, Madam, we shall be able to discover its author.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

As to that, it is scarce worth the enquiry.

Sir JAMES.

How, Madam!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

We have family reasons, Sir James, for wishing to draw a veil over—

Sir JAMES.

A veil! I am astonish'd, Lady Riscounter!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

The loss of your alliance, indeed, which now we dare neither expect, nor desire, has mortified us all not a little. If any other means could be found to form a connection between us, and a person of your merit and rank, there is nothing, I am sure, I should so ardently wish.

Sir JAMES.

Your ladyship is most exceedingly kind.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

I hope the whole family, especially myself and
H 2 daugh-

daughter, are not, through the error of one, to be punished with the loss of your friendship.

Sir JAMES.

You do me infinite honour.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Indeed, my Lucy, upon this occasion, felt chiefly for you; for tho' perhaps not so imposing and specious, as the girl whose lapse we lament, she has great goodness of heart, and a proper sense of your worth.

Sir JAMES.

Miss Lucy is most prodigiously—

Lady RISCOUNTER.

But Sir Robert's door opens, and as my presence may not be so proper upon this occasion, I take my leave, with the hopes of soon receiving a visit.

Sir JAMES.

I shall be happy, Madam, in seizing every occasion—~~your ladyship's~~—[*Exit Lady Riscounter.*] What can be the meaning of this? She seems to confirm and credit the infamous story. Sir Robert, I suppose, will explain it.

Enter Sir ROBERT.

Sir ROBERT.

Sir James, I scarce know how to accost you; but the confusion I feel at the unhappy cause of your visit.

Sir

Sir JAMES.

I Indeed, Sir Robert, I own myself greatly perplex'd. I enter'd your house, full of the warmest resentment, and prepar'd to take every active part in my power; but your lady has dropp'd some hints, as if you wish'd to stifle all further enquiry. Pray, Sir Robert, be candid and open. This, Sir, I think, I have right to demand.

Sir ROBERT.

Doubtless. Nor do I wish to conceal: there is room for suspicion, I own; so far Lady Riscounter is right; but yet, Lydia——

Sir JAMES.

You have then seen her, Sir Robert——

Sir ROBERT.

Not ten minutes ago. Her surprise seem'd so sincere, and so artless, and——

Sir JAMES.

Without doubt——

Sir ROBERT.

And such strong marks of truth, both in her words, and her looks, that I confess——perhaps it was a fatherly weakness, I could not help giving credit to all that she said.

Sir JAMES.

You did her but justice, I am sure. I will pawn my life upon her honour and faith.

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

But, yet how to reconcile—for, Sir James, I will be impartial; some accounts I have had—

Sir JAMES.

Time can only do that. Deep-laid designs are not discovered at once. If we can but get at the clue.—And what steps have you taken? have you been, or sent to the printer's?

Sir ROBERT.

No. I did think of going, but my lady persuaded me, that the step would be wrong.

Sir JAMES.

For which she had very good reasons, no doubt. Will you give me leave to accompany you thither?

Sir ROBERT.

If you think it right.

Sir JAMES.

The very first thing you should do.

Sir ROBERT.

But should not we consult my lady about it?

Sir JAMES.

The very last thing you should do.

Sir ROBERT.

And why so?

Sir JAMES.

I must beg to conceal my reasons at present. I too, have my suspicions, Sir Robert.

Sir

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Sir ROBERT.

You have,

Sir JAMES.

Which I fancy you will soon find to be better
founded than those of your family.

Sir ROBERT.

Not unlikely, Sir James.

Sir JAMES.

Come, Sir, my chariot is ready.

Sir ROBERT.

I attend you, Sir James.

[*Exeunt.*]

End of the **SECOND ACT.**

ACT.

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A C T III.

Enter ROBIN, *and a Servant of Sir*
ROBERT.

ROBIN.

MY service to Miss Kitty, and I should be happy to have the honour of her ear a moment.

SERVANT.

Of her ear!

ROBIN.

These low fellows know nothing of the phrases in fashion, mere Vandals and Goats : but I must accommodate myself to their country. Will you tell Miss Kitty Combrush, that I should be glad to speak with her, when she is at leisure?

SERVANT.

Now I understand what you mean, that will I, Master Robin. *[Exit.]*

ROBIN.

Damn'd provoking however, to have our ship funk just as we were entering the port; this could not happen but by the contrivance of some of the crew: our captain too is most horribly hurt. This jade, I am convinc'd, is in the whole of the plot; but her own art, and the skill of her prompter, will make it difficult to get at the bottom.

Enter

Enter KITTY.

KITTY.

Bless me, Mr. Robin, after what has pass'd,
I little expected to see you again at our house.

ROBIN.

What injustice both to me and yourself!

KITTY.

How so, Mr. Robin?

ROBIN.

To your powerful attractions, and my proper
discernment.

KITTY.

I did not know I had any such things, Mr.
Robin.

ROBIN.

Infinite! but above all your penetration is the
most surprising to me. The conjuror in the Old
Bailey is a fool compar'd to Miss Kitty. You
are absolutely as knowing as one of the Civils,
if the latter part of your prediction was but as
fully accomplish'd.

KITTY.

What was that?

ROBIN.

Our cohabitation in the same house, notwith-
standing——

KITTY.

Time may bring that about, Mr. Robin.

I

ROBIN.

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R O B I N.

I don't comprehend how that can happen.

K I T T Y.

No! why, to make your master amends for the loss of Miss Lydia, suppose we were to give him Miss Lucy—

R O B I N.

D'ye call that making my master amends?

K I T T Y.

She is a good showy girl, and her fortune—

R O B I N.

Will be no temptation to him, I know he detests her.

K I T T Y.

Indeed!

R O B I N.

Cordially. So that if that be the only means, I have nothing left but despair. Oh! Miss Kitty, think what misery! that tender frame has a tear for pity, I'm sure; to be deprived of the warmest wish of my life, to be cut off for ever—

K I T T Y.

And do you really think as you say?

R O B I N.

Nothing but an amiable ignorance of your own charms, could for a moment induce you to doubt it.

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K I T T Y.

Suppose then, Mr. Robin, we were to live under our own roof, instead of that of another; don't you think it would be mending the matter?

R O B I N.

It would be Elysium, my angel. But how to get at the means?

K I T T Y.

If that is your objection, they may be easily found.

R O B I N.

Does my lovely Kitty think I can have any other?

K I T T Y.

Then since that is the case, Mr. Robin, it is but right I should explain to you, what I meant, by my riddle, this morning. But see that we are safe.

R O B I N.

Not a foul.

K I T T Y.

You must know, then, that this whole affair of Miss Lydia is my lady's contrivance.

R O B I N.

What, is that whole story a fiction?

K I T T Y.

A mere sham; nothing else; and to bring about Sir James's marriage with Lucy, her motive.

I 2

R O B I N.

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ROBIN.

I conceive.

KITTY.

Now, as the project would not do without my assistance, my lady gave me (here it is, stuck in my stays) a note for five hundred pounds, if the match is broke off; and a thousand, should Miss Lucy's take place.

ROBIN.

Hum—hum—hum—500—hum—hum—Rebecca Riscouter—it is just as you say.

KITTY.

Now, as matters stand, you see I am entitled to the first 500 directly, and, with your assistance, perhaps the other may follow.

ROBIN.

Not unlikely. But hold a little, dear Kitty, a little caution may not be amiss. This mistress of yours is a damn'd artful woman; she has trick'd others, and won't scruple cheating of you.

KITTY.

I don't understand you.

ROBIN.

It is not quite clear that this note is a good one.

KITTY.

How!

ROBIN.

I mean such a one as she will be obliged hereafter to pay.

KITTY.

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K I T T Y.

Then the business shall be blown up in an instant.

R O B I N.

Too late. She will only laugh at you when her ends are obtain'd.

K I T T Y.

Then what steps can we take?

R O B I N.

There is an old master of mine, who lives in Brick-court in the Temple, as cunning a cur as ever hang'd an innocent man, or sav'd a rogue from the gallows. I'll run, and ask his opinion.

K I T T Y.

But won't that be betraying our secret?

R O B I N.

Counsellors, like confessors, are bound not to reveal their client's confession: besides, I can easily conceal the name of the party.

K I T T Y.

You will come immediately back?

R O B I N.

In an instant, unless I have your leave to go a step further.

K I T T Y.

Further!

R O B I N.

To Doctors Commons, for a little bit of parchment, that will soon unite us for ever.

K I T T Y.

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KITTY.

O law! you are in a vast prodigious great hurry; but, I think, Mr. Robin, you must do as you please.

ROBIN.

Thus let me acknowledge your kind condescension. For a moment then, my dear Kitty, adieu. [*Exit Kitty.*] So, now I have the means in my power to resettle all our matters again. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *A Printer's.*

MARGIN *discovered with News-papers, Account-books, &c.*

MARGIN.

September the 9th. Sold twelve hundred and thirty. June the 20th. Two thousand and six. Good increase for the time, considering too that the winter has been pretty pacific: dabbled but little in treasons, and not remarkably scurrilous, unless, indeed, in a few personal cases. We must season higher to keep up the demand. Writers in Journals, like rope-dancers, to engage the public attention, must venture their necks every step that they take. The pleasure people feel, arises from the risques that we run—what's the matter?

Enter DINGEY.

DINGEY.

Mr. Hyson has left the Answer to his last letter on East India affairs.

M A R-

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MARGIN.

A lazy rascal, now his letter is forgot, he comes with an answer. Besides, the subject is stale: Return it again. Are all our people in waiting?

DINGEY.

The Attorney General to the paper, that answers the law cases, is not come yet.

MARGIN.

Oh! that's Ben Bond'em the Bailiff; prudently done, perhaps he has a writ against one of our authors—Bid them enter, and call over their names.

DINGEY.

Walk in, Gentlemen.

Enter PEPPER, PLAISTER, RUMOUR, FORGE-
'EM, FIBBER, COMMA, CAUSTIC, O'FLAM,
and others.

DINGEY.

Politicians, pro and con, Messieurs Pepper and Plaister.

PEPPER, PLAISTER.

Here.

MARGIN.

Pepper and Plaister, as both the houses are up, I shall adjourn your Political Warfare 'till their meeting again.

PEPPER.

Don't you think the public would bear one skirmish more before we close the campaign? I have a trimmer here in my hand.

PLAIS-

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PLAISTER.

To which I have as tart a retort.

MARGIN.

No, no ; enough for the present. It is, Plaister, the proper timing the subject, that gives success to our labours. The conductor of a Newspaper, like a good cook, should always serve up things in their season : who eats oysters in June ? Plays and Parliament Houses are winter provisions.

PEPPER.

Then half the satire and salt will be lost : Besides, if the great man should happen to die, or go out.

MARGIN.

Pshaw ! it will do as well for the great man that comes in. Political papers should bear vamping ; like sermons, change but the application and text, and they will suit all persons and seasons.

PLAISTER.

True enough ; but mean time, what can we turn to ; for we shall be quite out of work ?

MARGIN.

I warrant you, if you an't idle, there's business enough, the press teems with fresh publications—Histories, translations, voyages—

PEPPER.

That take up as much time to read as to make.

MAR-

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MARGIN.

And what with letters from Paris or Spaw, inundations, elopements, dismal effects of thunder and lightning, remarkable causes at country assizes, and with changing the ministry now and then, you will have employment, enough for the Summer.

PLAISTER.

And so enter upon our old trade in the winter?

MARGIN.

Aye, or for variety, as it must be tiresome to take always one side; you, Pepper, may go over to administration, and Plaister will join opposition. The novelty may perhaps give fresh spirits to both.

PEPPER.

With all my heart. A bold writer has now no encouragement to sharpen his pen. I have known the day when there was no difficulty in getting a lodging in Newgate; but now, all I can say, won't procure me a warrant from a Westminster Justice.

MARGIN.

You say right, hard times, master Pepper, for persecution is the very life and soul of our trade; but don't despair, who knows how soon matters may mend? gentlemen, you may draw back.—Read the next.

DINGEY.

Criticks—Thomas Comma, and Christopher Caustic.

K

MARGIN

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MARGIN.

Where are they?

DINGEY.

As you could not find them in constant employment, they are engaged by the great, to do the articles in the Monthly Reviews.

MARGIN.

I thought they were done by Doctor Doubtful, the Deist.

DINGEY.

Formerly, but now he deals in manuscript sermons, writes religious essays for one of the Journals.

MARGIN.

Then he will soon sink. I foresaw what would come of his dramming. Go on.

DINGEY.

Collectors of paragraphs, Roger Rumour, and Phelim O'Flam.

RUMOUR, FLAM.

Here.

DING Y.

Fibber and Forge'em, composers and makers of ditto.

FIBB R, FORGE'EM.

Here.

MARGIN.

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MARGIN.

Well, Rumour, what have you brought for the press?

RUMOUR.

I have been able to bring you no Positives.

MARGIN.

How! no Positives?

RUMOUR.

Not one. I have a Probability from the court end of the town; and two good Supposes out of the city.

MARGIN.

Hand them here—[reads.] “ It is probable,
“ that if the King of Prussia should join the Czar-
“ ina, France will send a fleet into the Medi-
“ terranean, which, by giving umbrage to the
“ Maritime powers, will involve Spain by
“ its Family Compact. To which, if Austria
“ should refuse to accede, there may be a power-
“ ful diversion in Poland, made conjunctly by
“ Sweden and Denmark. And if Sardinia and
“ Sicily abide by the treaties, the German Prin-
“ ces can never be neuter; Italy will become the
“ seat of war, and all Europe soon set in a flame.
——Vastly well, master Rumour, finely confused,
and very alarming. Dingey, give him a shilling
for this. I hope no other paper has got it?

RUMOUR.

Oh fie! did you ever know me guilty of such a——

MARGIN.

M A R G I N.

True, true, now let us see your Supposes—
[Reads.] “ It is supposed, if Alderman Mango
 “ should surrender his gown, he will be succeed-
 “ ed by Mr. Deputy Drylips, and if my Lord
 “ Mayor should continue ill of the gout, it is
 “ supposed the swan-hopping will cease for this
 “ season.—That last suppose is fudged in, why,
 would you cram these upon me for a couple ?

R U M O U R.

As distinct as can be.

M A R G I N.

Fye, remember our bargain. You agreed to
 do the court of Aldermen always for six pence.

R U M O U R.

What if a Common Hall should be called ?

M A R G I N.

Oh ! then you are to have three-pence a mo-
 tion, I know that, very well : I am sure no gen-
 tleman can accuse me of being sneaking. Din-
 geey, give him six pence for his supposes. Well,
 Phelim O’Flam, any deaths in your district ?

O ’ F L A M.

The devil a one.

M A R G I N.

How ! none ?

O ’ F L A M.

O yes, a parcel of nobodies, that died worth
 nothing at all. Fellows that can’t pay for a fu-
 neral.

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neral. Upon my conscience, I can't think what becomes of the folks for my part, I believe, all the people who live in town, fall down dead in the country, and then too, since doctor Dispatch is gone to the Bath, patients linger so long.

MARGIN.

Indeed!

O'FLAM.

To be sure they do. Why, I waited at the Jolly Topers, a matter of two days and a half, for the last breath of Lady Dy Dropsy, for fear some other collector should catch it.

MARGIN.

A long time indeed.

O'FLAM.

Wasn't it? considering that she had two consultations besides, devilish tough. Mr. Margin, I shall quit the mortality walk, so provide yourself as soon as you can.

MARGIN.

I hope not.

O'FLAM.

Why, what will I do? I am sure the deaths wont keep me alive, you see I am already stripp'd to my shrowd; since November, the suicide season, I have not got salt to my porridge.

Enter Sir THOMAS TRADEWELL.

Sir THOMAS.

Is your name Matthew Margin?

MARGIN.

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MARGIN.

It is, and what then?

Sir THOMAS.

Then, pray what right had you to kill me in your last saturday's paper?

MARGIN.

Kill you!

Sir THOMAS.

Ay, Sir, here the article is; surely the law has some punishment for such insolent rascals as you.

MARGIN.

Punishment! and for what? but, after all, what injury have you sustain'd?

Sir THOMAS.

Infinite. All my agents are come post out of the country, my house is crouded with cousins, to be present at the opening my will, and there has been (as it is known she has a very good jointure) no less than three propofals of marriage already made to my relict.

MARGIN.

Let me look at the paragraph. [*Reads.*]
“ Last night, after eating a hearty supper, died
“ suddenly, with his mouth full of custard, Sir
“ Thomas Tradewell, knight, an amiable com-
“ panion, an affectionate relation, and a friend
“ to the poor.”—O’Flam, this is some blunder
of yours; for you see, here the gentleman is,
and alive.

O’FLAM.

THE BANKRUPT. 71

O'FLAM.

So he says, but the devil a one in this case would I believe but himself; because why, I was told it by Jeremy O'Turlough, his own body-chairman, my dear: by the same token, I treated him with a pint of porter for the good news.

Sir THOMAS.

Vastly oblig'd to you, Mr. O'Flam, but I have nothing to do with this wretched fellow; it is you, Margin, shall answer for this.

MARGIN.

Why, Sir Thomas, it is impossible but now and then we must kill a man by mistake. And in some measure to make amends, you see what a good character the paper has given you.

Sir THOMAS.

Character!

MARGIN.

Aye, Sir, I can tell you I have had a crown for putting in many a worse.

O'FLAM.?

Aye, Sir Thomas, consider of that, only think what a comfort it is, to live long enough after you are dead, to read such a good account of yourself in the papers.

Sir THOMAS.

Ha! ha! ha! what a ridiculous rascal! but I would advise you, gentlemen, not to take such liberties with me for the future. *[Exit.]*

O'FLAM.

O'FLAM.

Indeed and we won't; and I here give Mr. Margin my word, that you shan't die again, as long as you live, unless, indeed, we get it from under your own hand.

Enter Sir ROBERT RISCOUNTER,
and Sir JAMES BIDDULPH.

Sir ROBERT.

Where is this Margin, this impudent, rascally Printer?

MARGIN.

Hey day! what's the matter now?

Sir JAMES.

Curb your choler, Sir Robert.

Sir ROBERT.

A pretty fellow, indeed, that every man's and woman's reputation must be subject to the power of his poisonous pen.

Sir JAMES.

A little patience, Sir Robert.

Sir ROBERT.

A land of liberty, this! I will maintain it, the tyranny exercised by that fellow, and those of his tribe is more despotic and galling, than the most absolute monarch's in Asia.

Sir JAMES.

Well, but——

Sir ROBERT.

Sir ROBERT.

Their thrones claim a right only over your persons and property, whilst this mungrel, squatting upon his joint stool, by a single line, proscribes and ruins your reputation at once.

Sir JAMES.

Sir Robert, let me crave—

Sir ROBERT.

And no situation is secure from their insults. I wonder every man is not afraid to peep into a paper, as it is more than probable that he may meet with a paragraph, that will make him unhappy for the rest of his life.

MARGIN.

But, Gentlemen, what is all this business about?

Sir ROBERT.

About? zounds, Sir, what right had you to ruin my daughter?

MARGIN.

I? I know nothing of you nor your daughter.

Sir ROBERT.

Sir James Biddulph, you have it, produce the paper.

Sir JAMES.

There is no occasion for that, the affair is so recent, I dare say the Gentleman will remember the passage; this, Sir, is the Banker, the father, with whose daughter you was pleased to take those insolent freedoms, this morning.

L

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

And this, Sir, the amiable Baronet, from the West end of the Town.

MARGIN.

I recollect. Well, gentlemen, if you have brought any paragraphs to contradict the report, I am ready to insert them directly.

Sir ROBERT.

And so, you rascal, you want us to furnish fresh food for your paper?

MARGIN.

I do all I can to keep my scales even; the charge hangs heavy here; on the other side, you may throw in the defence, then see which will weigh down the other.

Sir ROBERT.

Indeed, Sir James Biddulph, if he does that—

Sir JAMES.

That! can that paltry expedient atone for his crime? will the snow that is sullied recover its lustre? so tender and delicate, Sir Robert, is the fame of a lady, that once tainted, it is tarnish'd for ever.

Sir ROBERT.

True enough.

MARGIN.

I could bear no ill-will to your daughter, as I know nothing about her.

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

Indeed, Sir James, I don't see how he could.

Sir JAMES.

Is his being the instrument of another man's malice, a sufficient excuse?

Sir ROBERT.

So far from it, that it enhances the guilt. Zounds, Sir James, you are a Parliament Man, why don't you put an end to this practice?

MARGIN.

Ay, let them attack the press, if—

Sir ROBERT.

Have a care of that; no no, that must not be done.

Sir JAMES.

No man, Sir Robert, honours that sacred shield of freedom more than myself.

Sir ROBERT.

I dare say.

Sir JAMES.

But I would not have it serve to shelter these pests, who point their poison'd arrows against the peace of mankind.

Sir ROBERT.

By no means in the world. Let them be dragg'd from behind it directly.

L 2

MARGIN.

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MARGIN.

Ay, do destroy the watchful dogs that guard and cover your flocks.

Sir JAMES.

You guard, you cover!

MARGIN.

Ay, who but us alarm the nation when bad designs are on foot?

Sir ROBERT.

In that respect, they are very useful no doubt.

Sir JAMES.

Are they therefore entitled to give the alarm, when no such design is intended?

Sir ROBERT.

By no means. A pack of factious, infamous scoundrels.

MARGIN.

It is we that supply the defects of the laws.

Sir JAMES.

You!

MARGIN.

By stigmatizing those offenders that they cannot reach.

Sir ROBERT.

That, indeed serves to keep the guilty in awe.

Sir

THE BANKRUPT

Sir JAMES.

And is a pretence for making the innocent the butts of their malice.

Sir ROBERT.

True, true, all is fish that comes to their nets.

Sir JAMES.

Besides, their slander is scattered so generally, and with so little discretion, that the deformity of vice is destroyed.

Sir ROBERT.

True.

Sir JAMES.

Bad men are made worse, by becoming totally callous, and even the good rendered careless, to that source of patriotism, that pride of virtue, the public opinion.

Sir ROBERT.

And they are much in the right on't.

MARGIN.

What, you are a courtier, I reckon? no wonder you wish the press was demolished.

Sir JAMES.

If ever that happens, to such miscreants as you 'twill be owing; nor will it surprize me, if all orders concur to give up a great public benefit, for the sake and security of private honour and peace.

Sir

78 THE BANKRUPT.

Sir ROBERT.

Nor me neither.

MARGIN.

You would consent then to surrender the press?

Sir ROBERT.

I would sooner consent to be hang'd.

Sir JAMES.

And its unbounded licence continue?

Sir ROBERT.

I would much rather see it on fire.

MARGIN.

With respect to its general use——

Sir ROBERT.

Not the smallest doubt can be made.

Sir JAMES.

But, Sir Robert, then the abuse——

Sir ROBERT.

Is what no mortal can bear.

MARGIN.

But, Sir Robert, you would but just now——

Sir ROBERT.

I confess it, I did.

Sir JAMES.

Ay, but that was, Sir Robert, because.——

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

For no other reason in life.

MARGIN.

My observation you allowed to be—

Sir ROBERT.

Pointed.

Sir JAMES.

And my reply—

Sir ROBERT.

Conclusive as could be.

MARGIN.

But then—

Sir ROBERT.

To be sure.

Sir JAMES.

Because why—

Sir ROBERT.

You are quite in the right.

O'FLAM.

Upon my soul, they have got the old gentleman into such puzzlement, that I don't believe he knows what he wishes himself. Stand by and let me clear up this matter a little. Hearkee, Mr. Sir Robert, if I understand your meaning at all, it is, that provided people could be prevented from publishing, you are willing the press should be free.

Sir ROBERT.

That was my meaning no doubt.

O'FLAM.

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O'FLAM.

Upon my conscience, and nothing but reason. There, I believe, we are all of us agreed. How seldom would people differ, if once we could get them to be all of a mind? And now this difference is whole and compos'd, let me try if I can't make up the other. I understand here, old gentleman, you have had a daughter abused.

Sir ROBERT.

Most foully.

O'FLAM.

And you want to know who was the author?

Sir ROBERT.

That was my sole business here.

O'FLAM.

Then why could not you say so at first, without all this bothering and bawling? Well, master Margin, come give the old buck satisfaction.

MARGIN.

It was anonymous.

O'FLAM.

Upon my soul, and I thought so. That is the most damnedst, impudent son of a bitch, he had like to have brought me into three or four scrapes, by fathering his lies upon me.

Sir JAMES.

Will you give us leave to look at the hand?

MARGIN.

Freely, this is the paper.

Sir

THE BANKRUPT. 81

Sir JAMES.

Sir Robert, do you recollect to have seen this writing before?

Sir ROBERT.

It is James's, I know it as well as my own: here are his B's, his G's, and his T's.

Sir JAMES.

So I guess'd. Will you trust the paper with us?

Sir ROBERT.

Let him get it again, if he can.—Sir James, I shall expect you at home. *[Exit.]*

MARGIN.

I hope no bad use will be made of it.

Sir JAMES.

The worst use has already been made of it; but at parting, Mr. Margin, let me give you a piece of advice. Take care how you provoke the publick patience too far. You have set the laws at defiance, and long reign'd uncontroul'd, I confess; but don't wonder if the subjects of your slander forget there are laws in their turn, and, valuing an honest name more than their lives, should expose their lives to revenge it.

[Exit.]

O'FLAM.

Upon my soul, Mr. Margin, very wholesome advice, and will do you much good if you take it; but, above all, rid your hands of James Anonymous as soon as you can; you know it

M

was

82 THE BANKRUPT.

was he got you that beating.—That fellow has brought you into more scrapes than all your authors together.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Gentlemen, the milk porridge is ready.

A L L.

Let us start fair I beseech you. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Lady RISCOUNTER, LUCY, and KITTY.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Sir James Biddulph is gone?

K I T T Y.

Yes, Madam, and with him my master.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Sir Robert! to what place, can you guess?

K I T T Y.

I should think, by what I overheard, to the printer's.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

To the printer's! of what use can that be?

K I T T Y.

I can't say; but your ladyship, I hope, will excuse me.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Excuse you, why child, what's the matter?

K I T T Y.

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KITTY.

I have heard some whispering among the clerks, as if things were not quite so well with my master.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

What, some little disappointments in trade?

KITTY.

Much worse, I am afraid; I don't know what it means; but they say an extent is brought into the house.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

With all my heart; let what will happen, it can be of little importance to me.

LUCY.

No, Madam!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

No, child, you can't suppose, but upon my marriage, I took care, at all events, to secure a proper provision.

LUCY.

Indeed! can that be done?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

A common caution, my dear; don't you see Mrs. Paduafoy rides in her coach, whilst half her husband's creditors are in gaol.

LUCY.

Is that the case?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

If wives were to have any thing to do with those

84 THE BANKRUPT.

those kind of creatures, who d'ye think would marry with people in business? and now I think on't, it will be so much the better; for the father's failure must in some measure fall on the daughter.

LUCY.

True; but your ladyship saw Sir James Bidulph.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

For a moment only, my dear.

LUCY.

Well, Madam, and——

Lady RISCOUNTER.

I only just threw out a hint; to be more explicit now, would make him suspicious; we must give him time to digest his disappointment.

KITTY.

As I live, Miss Lydia is coming.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Lydia!

Enter LYDIA.

LYDIA.

I beg your ladyship's pardon, for intruding without your permission; but, my unfortunate situation will, I hope, plead my excuse: I come, Madam, to beg your protection.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Mine, child?

LYDIA.

LYDIA.

Your assistance, in detecting the authors of this horrid design.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

That, child, is properly your father's concern.

LYDIA.

True, Madam; but the relation your ladyship bears to his family might, I hope, induce you to do me this justice.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Justice, Lydia!—as it is my duty, I shall ever be ready to give my advice.

LYDIA.

That, Madam, is all that I want.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

As this affair has made such a noise, there remains but one step to be taken.

LYDIA.

Which is——

Lady RISCOUNTER.

A marriage with James.

LYDIA.

With James! and so sanctify the scandalous story.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

It may be alledged by the family, that the ceremony had pass'd before the detection.

LYDIA.

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LYDIA.

Detection! I hope your ladyship does not suppose there is the smallest foundation?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

That I shall not pretend to determine. But, at all events, you are in the right to deny it.

LYDIA.

Your ladyship's indifference shocks me more than the——Your daughter, Lucy, will do me justice I am sure, she has been privy to every—

LUCY.

Me, Miss? I beg pardon for that: how should I know your Intrigues? I beg you will not involve me in your guilt.

LYDIA.

Nay, then it is in vain to struggle; I see, my ruin is resolv'd.

Enter Sir ROBERT.

Sir ROBERT.

Where is Lady Riscounter? well, my dear, we have got to the bottom of this infernal business at last—here, here it is, in the rascal's own hand.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Sir Robert!

Sir ROBERT.

Why, the paragraph was sent to the printer's by James.

Lady

THE BANKRUPT 87

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Well ?

Sir ROBERT.

So that you see proves the forgery plain.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Now I think it makes the fact more apparent.

Sir ROBERT.

How ?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

By the confession of one of the parties.

Sir ROBERT.

That I confess, as it was voluntary—

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Makes it amount to a positive proof.

Sir ROBERT.

It looks very suspicious indeed.

Enter Sir JAMES BIDDULPH.

Sir ROBERT.

Here my lady, Sir James, thinks, that instead of clearing, this paper only serves to convince her.

Sir JAMES.

Is that your ladyship's judgment ?

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Quite to a demonstration, Sir James.

Sir

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Sir JAMES.

But his policy.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Obvious enough ; to force the family to solicit his marrying the girl, as a favour.

Sir JAMES.

That, indeed!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

With the hopes, perhaps, of obtaining some additional advantage.

Sir ROBERT.

In return, no doubt, for his great condescension. An infamous——

Sir JAMES.

I should have thought the young lady's private fortune, and person, especially to one of his rank, a very sufficient inducement. But this Mr. James is an absolute Machiavel.

Sir ROBERT.

As fly a dog as ever existed.

Sir JAMES.

But could not we see him, Sir Robert?

Sir ROBERT.

The rascal is run off.

Sir JAMES.

Indeed!

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

We have search'd for him all the town over.

Sir JAMES.

That is unlucky, as I should have been glad to have ask'd him a question. I believe it is unnecessary to apologize to the family, for any part I take in this business.

Sir ROBERT.

We are all highly obliged.

Sir JAMES.

But I have received a letter, the contents of which astonish me much.

Sir ROBERT.

About the matter in hand?

Sir JAMES.

Indeed the writer is but a dependant of mine, but his veracity is out of the question, the facts must speak for themselves. Mrs. Kitty, you will be kind enough to stay here for a moment.

KITTY.

What can be the meaning of this?

Sir JAMES.

If the charge is false, I am sure, Lady Riscounter will pardon me for the sake of the motive. If true, she, in her turn, will stand in want of all our forgiveness.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Me! who will dare to impeach my conduct, Sir James?

N

Sir

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Sir JAMES.

Your ladyship's patience, a moment. This paper, Sir Robert, charges Lady Riscounter with being the sole contriver of this villainous project.

Sir ROBERT.

How!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Me!

Sir JAMES.

With a view of dissolving the contract between your fair daughter and me.

Sir ROBERT.

To what purpose? what end?

Sir JAMES.

One that does me too much honour, I own, the bringing about a union between Miss Lucy and me.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

A most probable story, indeed: your informer's name, if you please.

Sir JAMES.

A servant who has oft attended me here.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And he receiv'd it from——

Sir JAMES.

One of your ladyship's women; there she stands, I believe.

LYDIA

THE BANKRUPT. 91

LYDIA.

Is it possible that you, Kitty—

Sir ROBERT.

Patience, Lydia, a moment.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

And you think this paltry plot, obviously fram'd by a couple of servants, (unless you condescend to be the contriver yourself) will justify you in bringing this charge against a person of my rank and condition.

Sir ROBERT.

Fie, fie, Sir James, that is too presumptuous indeed.

Sir JAMES.

Why, I should not have ventur'd, I believe, if I had not to produce a more unexceptionable witness than these.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Name the person directly.

Sir JAMES.

Lady Riscounter herself.

Sir ROBERT.

What?

Sir JAMES.

There is a little billet contain'd in this letter, where your ladyship promises a capital sum, when some certain services are fully perform'd.

Sir ROBERT.

By your leave, Sir James, let me look. Oh,
N 2 clear,

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clear, clear, it is her hand, there is no denying of this.

Sir JAMES.

I fancy Mrs. Kitty will own it. Otherwise my servant is below to confront her.

Sir ROBERT.

Well, what reply do you make to all this?

KITTY.

I beg pardon, Sir, of my mistress, and you.

Sir ROBERT.

Pardon.

KITTY.

I own the accusation is just, though I little thought Mr. Robin would betray me.

Sir ROBERT.

Do you? and what an ungrateful wretch must you be? you have been but a poor instrument only. But is it possible you, Lady Riscounter, could so entirely forget what you owe to me, and your——

Lady RISCOUNTER.

I see, Sir Robert, you are so far prepossess'd, that all I can say——

Sir ROBERT.

Say, Madam, what can be said for such——

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Nay, Sir, I am not going to make a formal defence, it is not worth my while, nor would you have leisure to hear it: if you will walk
3 down

THE BANKRUPT. 93

down, you will find another sort of business, that demands your attention.

Sir ROBERT.

Madam!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

The house fill'd with a new kind of customers.

LYDIA, Sir ROBERT, Sir JAMES.

How!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Only an extent, to seize on all his effects.

LYDIA, Sir ROBERT, Sir JAMES.

Is it possible!

Lady RISCOUNTER.

The world will therefore see how ill I am treated—but don't imagine, Sir Robert, that the provision I derive from her father, shall be lavished to lessen your debts, or be employ'd in support of their author.

LUCY.

Your ladyship will have more prudence, no doubt.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

No, child, we will quit this mansion directly, and leave him for consolation to the care of his daughter.

LYDIA.

A more precious trust, I could never receive. Your treachery to me, Madam, I could both despise and forgive: but your insolent triumph, at the distress of an unfortunate husband, gives
you

THE BANKRUPT.

you a pre-eminence above the worst of your sex. If, Sir, what you are pleased to call mine, can either reinstate, or assist you, I beg it may be all employ'd in the service.

Sir ROBERT.

Nay, pr'ythee, Lydia—

LYDIA.

You see, Sir James Biddulph, there are new obstacles oppos'd to your purpose.

Sir JAMES.

If you mean those her ladyship has been pleas'd to produce, they add only an additional strength to my wishes. The piety with which this great, this first duty is discharg'd, must accompany every other relation in life. I applaud, and shall be happy to join in your purpose.

Lady RISCOUNTER.

Come, Lucy, let us leave these romantick creatures together, they are only fit for each other; when your effects are convey'd to proper trustees, I shall take care to put in my claim.

[Exeunt Lady Riscounter and Lucy.]

Sir ROBERT.

Unfeeling, insolent woman! but thy goodness, Lydia, supplies every loss, nor will my creditors, when they find I never deceiv'd them, take advantage of thy filial affection.

Enter a CLERK.

What now?

CLERK.

THE BANKRUPT. 95

CLERK.

The Dutch mail is arrived.

Sir ROBERT.

Any private letters from Holland?

CLERK.

Your correspondents, Sir, have honour'd your bills.

Sir ROBERT.

And discharg'd them?

CLERK.

Every one.

Sir ROBERT.

And the report of their failing——

CLERK.

Was without the smallest foundation.

Sir ROBERT.

Heaven be prais'd; now, Lydia, thy father can look again with confidence in the face of his friends.

LYDIA.

A more real transport could never have reach'd me!

Sir ROBERT.

I know it, Lydia, I know it. This gentleman will both thank and reward you.

CLERK.

Sir, I would beg just to——

Sir

Sir ROBERT.

I guess what you mean; some inquisitive persons below; they shall be satisfied soon. I will attend them directly. *[Exit Clerk.]*

Sir JAMES.

Give me leave to join in the general joy. But what, Sir Robert, shall we do with this paper? I fancy my man is in waiting; Robin.

Enter ROBIN.

ROBIN.

Sir.

Sir JAMES.

You have been of singular service to-day, which I shall take good care to acknowledge. The worth of this note, as the conditions have fail'd——

ROBIN.

Like many more of its kindred, is reduc'd to waste paper, your honour; but as this happy turn has been chiefly owing to Kitty, I hope she will be restor'd to favour again.

Sir JAMES:

But consider, Robin, that was not her intention.

ROBIN.

But recollect, Sir, the temptation——

Sir ROBERT.

But the treachery——

ROBIN.

Five hundred pounds.

Sir

THE BANKRUPT. 97

Sir ROBERT.

That is true—as many, her superiors, tho' perhaps not her betters, are daily detected in doing things more criminal for less consideration, it is some excuse, I confess. But what says my Lydia?

LYDIA.

I shall be directed by you.

Sir ROBERT.

And now, my children, nothing remains but the last act, to establish your union, and if (as I am resolved to disengage myself from that bad woman, and the other cares of this world) you will suffer me to be a partaker of your domestic felicity——

Sir JAMES, LYDIA.

You cannot in any thing oblige us so much.

Sir ROBERT.

That is all I have to ask of you, or the world.
[*Exeunt.*]

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A COMEDY

IN THREE ACTS

BY

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and

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P R O L O G U E.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mr. FOOTE.

IN trifling works of Fancy, wits agree,
That nothing tickles like a simile:
And so, by way of tuning you to laughter,
With which, I hope, you'll tickle us hereafter,
From our poetick storehouse, we produce
A couple, spick and span for present use.
Dramatick writers were, like watchmen, meant
To knock down Vice—few answer the intent;
Both should be quick to see and seize their game;
But both are sometimes blind, and sometimes lame:
Can those cry *stand*, while they themselves are reeling?
Can those catch thieves, while they themselves are
stealing?

When wanted most, the watch a nap will take—
Are all our comick authors quite awake?
Or, what is worse, by which they still come near 'em,
Are not you more than half asleep who hear 'em?
I, your old watchman, here have fix'd my stand,
On many a vice and folly laid my hand:
'Twas you cried *watch!* I limp'd at your command. }
Let me, like other watchmen, bless the times,
And take the privilege to nod betimes;
Nor let your frowns now force me on a fright
To cry——“ *Past seven o'clock, and a cloudy night,*”

But, with your patience not to be too free,
We'll change the subject and the simile.
To chase a smuggling crew, who law deride,
We launch a cutter of three guns this tide:
With your assistance, we will make the foe
Sink, or submit to CAPTAIN TIMBERTOE.
Ye pirate criticks, fall not foul on me!
If once I sink, I founder in the sea.
In this condition, can I swim to shore?
I'm cork'd, 'tis true; but then I want an oar.
You oft have sav'd my little bark from sinking:
I am no fish, save me from water-drinking!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ,

Mr. AIRCASTLE,
TOBY,
Mr. O'FLANNAGAN,
COLONEL GORGET,
FLAW,
TOM,
MOSES MANASSES,
ROGER,
HELLEBORE,
PRIG,
Servant,

Mr. Foote.
Mr. Weston.
Mr. Bannister.
Mr. Aickin.
Mr. Wilson.
Mr. Fearon.
Mr. Burton.
Mr. Griffith.
Mr. Baddeley.
Mr. Parsons.

Mrs. FLEECE'EM,
Mrs. SIMONY,
Mrs. AIRCASTLE,
BETSY BLOSSOM,
MARIANNE,
Maid,

Miss Sherry.
Mrs. Gardner.
Miss Platt.
Mrs. Jewell.
Mrs. Smith.

T H E

T H E
C O Z E N E R S,

A C T I. S C E N E I,

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em and Flaw.

Mrs. Fleece'em.

NOT a word more! you put me out of all patience.

Flaw. Well, but, madam Fleece'em, listen, I beg, to a little reason.

Mrs. Fl. Reason? had you the least atom about you, you would rest contented with our present agreement.

Flaw. But surely, madam, a change of circumstances——

Mrs. Fl. Change? And pray, master Flaw, how are mine changed for the better? Answer me a few short questions, and deny what I say, if you can. When I was compelled, by the cruel laws of this country, to go into exile for

B

taking

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taking by mistake a small parcel of lace out of a shop in the Strand, did not I choose Boston for my place of retirement?

Flaw. Granted.

Mrs. Fl. Did not I pass there, by means of letters from mynheer Van Smuggle of Rotterdam, for a person most honourably and nobly allied?

Flaw. For aught I know.

Mrs. Fl. Did not I receive a handsome present from that merchant, for promoting the running Dutch teas, and rejecting those imported from England?

Flaw. Like enough.

Mrs. Fl. Did not my burning the first pound of Souchong, and my speeches at Faneuil-Hall, and the Liberty-Tree, against the colonies contributing to discharge a debt to which they owe their existence, procure me the love and esteem of the people?

Flaw. May be so.

Mrs. Fl. And what, but your letters, could induce me to return to a country where I had been treated so ill? But sure, you must have forgot your proposals; here they are, and signed by yourself. Let me see!—[*Reads.*] “Articles
“of Agreement between Philip Flaw, of
“Thayies-Inn, in the city of London, on one
“part,

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“part, and Felicia Fleece’em, late of Boston,
“but now of Pall-Mall.”

Flaw. But what occasion——

Mrs. Fl. “*Imprimis*, That the said Felicia
“do take a handsome house, at the West end
“of the town, with suitable servants; for the
“furnishing of which the said Flaw engages to
“procure her credit.”

Flaw. And have not I?

Mrs. Fl. “Secondly, that the said Flaw shall
“circulate, privately and publickly, in taverns,
“coffee-houses, Journals, Chronicles, Morning
“and Evening-Posts, and Courants, that the said
“Felicia is a person of great address and abi-
“lities; and that, by means of many powerful
“connections, she is able to procure posts,
“places, preferments of all conditions and
“sizes; to raise cash for the indigent, and pro-
“cure good securities for such as are wealthy;
“suitable matches for people who want hus-
“bands and wives, and divorces for those who
“wish to get rid of them.”

Flaw. And have not I performed every tittle?
have not my expences in attending plays, operas,
masquerades, and Pantheons, not to mention
subscription-money to most of the clubs, and
coteries, amounted to a most enormous——

Mrs. Fl. I am near at an end.—[*Reads.*]

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“That the said Flaw shall at all times advise
“the said Felicia how far she may go without
“incurring the law; for all which he is to
“receive out of the neat profits thirty *per cent.*”
—You see, Sir!

Flaw. I do.

Mrs. Fl. And don't you think *that* a very ample provision?

Flaw. But consider, madam, I have sacrificed my whole time to your business, and I don't believe the law has procured me——

Mrs. Fl. The law? What, a little, private agency at the Old Bailey? a wonderful sacrifice! fy, fy, Mr. Flaw!

Flaw. You are the last person, Mrs. Fleece'em, that should cast such a reflection as that: Unless I mistake, my attendance there was pretty useful to you.

Mrs. Fl. To me?

Flaw. Without my skill and address, your last voyage to America would have been changed to a much shorter trip.

Mrs. Fl. Sir!

Flaw. A tour to Tyburn, in a tim-whisky and two, would have concluded your travels.

Mrs. Fl. Why, you impertinent, infamous, petty-fogging puppy, it was through your ignorance that I was obliged to travel at all.

Flaw.

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Flaw. Mine?

Mrs. Fl. Did not Alick Alibi, before your face, at Blackwall, in the Transport, declare, that he never saw such a bungling business; that if he had been employed——

Flaw. Alibi?

Mrs. Fl. You know him, I fancy.

Flaw. Perfectly: As, madam, you think him so wonderfully clever, you had better employ him; I am ready to resign, in his favour.

Mrs. Fl. That is ungenerous in you, Mr. Flaw, to insult a gentleman under misfortunes: You know the clipping and filing affair compels him to keep a little private at present.

Flaw. Oh, then, that's the reason I am consulted? sweet madam, your servant! But, madam, I must desire you to find out some other agent: I declare off! you sha'n't make a stop-gap of me!

Mrs. Fl. Sir!

Flaw. Our accounts are easily settled: Let me see! Seven pounds seven shillings, from the brewer's clerk, who is gone with your commendatory letters to India.

Mrs. Fl. Nine pounds, if you please.

Flaw. Seven. The rest paid out of my pocket to Kitt Copywell, for manufacturing the letters from the directors.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Fl. Very well! Have you got the fellow aboard?

Flaw. Sailed the latter end of the week.

Mrs. Fl. Then there is the crimp's money, for procuring the company an able recruit.

Flaw. Already deducted, for promising to get Bob Bluefkin a reprieve at the——

Mrs. Fl. These, Mr. Flaw, are but trifling affairs; they may be settled at some other time.

Flaw. I am ready, whenever you please: And so, madam Fleecee'm, I am your most humble, and very—— Oh! I had like to have forgot; if any thing should happen, that I may not be blamed, *in futuro*, I would advise you to take care of yourself: I overheard Luke Lockup, the turnkey, say, as you passed by in a coach, that he had some notion of having seen you before, and wanted much to know where you lodged.

Mrs. Fl. Luke Lockup? why, how is it possible he could——

Flaw. I know nothing of that: Foreseeing, indeed, that such a thing might possibly happen, I had provided a couple of people to prove that you were shipwreck'd on the Western coast; so that, though you were returned before your time from your travels, it was none of your fault.

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fault; but that is all over now; Mr. Alibi will, no doubt, take proper care.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, as to that, Mr. Flaw, there is no man living to whose care I would sooner trust myself than your own; but sure in this affair we have been both of us rather too quick. Let us coolly consider: I am sure, I am the furthest in the world from—— But come; let us know what are your further demands?

Flaw. I scorn, madam, to take any advantage: As our risques and labour are equal, an equal partition; that's all.

Mrs. Fl. I consent to the agreement.

Flaw. Very well. I will prepare a draft to lay before council; which, when approved, you will sign?

Mrs. Fl. Without scruple; that being settled, let us come a little to business. What new game have you sprung?

Flaw. Plenty, plenty; the family I expected out of the country is come.

Mrs. Fl. Father, mother, and son! have you seen them?

Flaw. I received their note but this instant: They have made a little mistake I believe as to their lodgings.

Mrs. Fl. How so?

Flaw. I advised them, at their coming to
TOWN

§ THE COZENERS.

town to stay at one of the Hotels for a week or ten days; instead of that, they are got to a Bagnio.

Mrs. Fl. A Bagnio?

Flaw. At the sign of the Lamb, in Long-Acre.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, for aught I know, that place will best answer our purpose.

Flaw. I must step directly to the Salopian Coffee-House; Ensign Gaters is to send you a hundred for obtaining him a step in his corps. Here; I have brought you the complimentary cards to put over the chimney.

[*Gives her the cards.*]

Mrs. Fl. That's right. Let me see:—*The Duke of—best respects—Earl of—Viscount—Ah, ah; very well! Have you prevailed on the coachman you mentioned?*

Flaw. He has promised to parade before your house for an hour, after his master is set down at the Cockpit. A couple of servants to wait at the door, as if the great man was above, will be right.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A note, Sir, from a person below.

Flaw. Let us see it.—[*Reads.*] “Mr. O’Flanagan’s compliments to Mr. Flaw, and as he “perhaps may not choose to be at home to him, “being

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“being at another body’s house, begs to know
“where he may see him this evening.”—A
bagatelle; some trifling affair.

Mrs. Fl. You had therefore better dispatch
him at once. Shew him up.

Flaw. He brought me a recommendatory
letter this morning; but I was in a hurry, and
desired him to meet me here about this time.
Here he is.

Enter Mr. O’Flannagan.

O’Flan. Mr. Flaw, I am your most humble
servant. Madam, I am yours unknown.

Flaw. Well, Mr. O’Flannagan, what are
your commands with me?

O’Flan. Oh, Mr. Flaw, we will postpone
that, if you please: I hope I am a little better
bred than to mention any thing of my private
affairs before ladies; their little ears, sweet
creatures, should be tickled with nothing but
love.

Flaw. True, true; but here you may suspend
your politeness a little; for, unless I am mis-
taken, it is to this lady’s good offices you must
be oblig’d in your present pursuit.

O’Flan. Oh! that indeed alters the case, Why
then, madam, this is my business at once: You
must understand I came over lately from Lime-
rick;

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rick; and there, upon my soul, all the world are gone mad about running beyond sea, in search after—I think it is *emigrations* they call them.

Mrs. Fl. I have heard, indeed, that there has been a prodigious desertion.

O' Flan. Prodigious! upon my soul, madam, in a hundred miles riding, I did not meet with a human cratur, except sheep and oxen, to tell me the road; and I should have lost myself again and again, but for the mile-stones, that are so kind to answer your questions without giving you the trouble to ask them: And so, being desirous to follow my neighbours' example, I have, madam, made bold to come over before them.

Flaw. Right; one would not like to be last in the chase.

O' Flan. True. Now, madam, as some emigrations must be better than other some, I should be glad to be recommended to one of the best.

Flaw. Why, that will be no very difficult matter. Let me see! is the collector of the window-lights in Falkland's Island disposed of?

Mrs. Fl. I have not heard that it has been given away; but, however, if it should, the surveyorship of the woods there is vacant, I am sure.

Flaw.

THE COZENERS. 11

Flaw. Indeed?

O' Flan. And pray, madam, is that a lucrative place, as to the profit?

Mrs. Fl. Besides the salary, for perquisites you are to have all the loppings and toppings.

Flaw. Ay? upon my word, if that can be got, you will be a happy man, Mr. O' Flanagan.

O' Flan. Without doubt, I shall be in very good luck. But pray, madam, what was the name of the Falklands?

Mrs. Fl. Falkland's Island.

O' Flan. Island! true, true. But, Mr. Flaw, is it a place one can go to by land? becaase why, I am not over-fond of the sea; coming over t'other day from Donechedy, it tumbled and jumbled, and rumbled me to such a degree!

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Flaw—

Flaw. I am afraid it will be difficult.

O' Flan. Why then, if it is equally the same, I should be glad to have an emigration in some other parts.

Mrs. Fl. There was a thing that I got yesterday for a relation of mine, that would have suited this gentleman.

O' Flan. Pray, what might that be?

Mrs. Fl. A tidewaiter's place in the inland part of America.

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O' Flan. Inland ! that would just do to a T.

Flaw. Why, you may easily provide in some other way for your cousin.

Mrs. Fl. That's true ; but then, you know, he has put himself to some expence, in fitting himself out for the——

Flaw. Oh ! I dare say Mr. O'Flannagan will be glad to reimburse him.

O' Flan. That I will ; and give him a good spill for his resignation, into the bargain.

Mrs. Fl. Well, Sir, if you will call here to-morrow, we will try to bring matters to bear ; and——

[*O' Flan. going.*]

Flaw. This will be a damn'd fine thing, if you can get it.——Hark'ee ! a word in your ear ! if you discharge well your duty, you will be found in tar and feathers for nothing.

O' Flan. Tar and feathers ? and what the devil will I do wid them, my dear ?

Flaw. When properly mixed, they make a genteel kind of dress, which is sometimes wore in that climate.

O' Flan. Oh ! what, I suppose, a kind of linen, like that at Belfast, that the natives malefactor themselves.

Flaw. True. And they will shew you the best manner to wear it ; it is very light, keeps out the rain, and sticks extremely close to the skin.

O' Flan.

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O' Flan. Indeed! That is very convenient. Why, as this place seems to suit me so well, before I get the nomination, by way of binding the bargain, had not I better give some earnest beforehand?

Flaw. That will be making things sure.

O' Flan. Here is a fifty-pound note of Latouche's, payable at sight in a fortnight.

Mrs. Fl. Vastly well! I shall take proper care on't.

O' Flan. I don't doubt it at all. Feathers that keep out the rain? they must be ducks', to be sure, because they are used to the water: I can't help thinking, Mr. Flaw, when I have got on the dress, how like a goose I shall look. [*Exit.*

Flaw. Here is the note.

Mrs. Fl. This was lucky beyond expectation! If this goes on, in a little time we shall grow as rich as a keeper of one of the capital clubs.

[*A rap at the door.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A gentleman below wishes to see Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. What sort of a person?

Serv. Vast finely dress'd, please your——

Flaw. Oh! I know. Shew him up!—The Israelite I was telling you of.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Fl. What, Mr. Moses Manaffes?

Flaw. The same.

Enter Moses Manaffes.

Walk in, Mr. Manaffes! this, Sir, is the lady.

Moses. I vas never see a more finer vomans since I vas born. Madam, I vas take de liberty to beg-a your protection upon a littel affairs.

Mrs. Fl. Sir, any friend of Mr. Flaw's —

Moses. I vas live in de sheety; but I have great ambition to reside at de court-end of de town.

Mrs. Fl. City? I could not have imagined that a gentleman of your dress and address would submit to live in the city.

Moses. Madam, you vas exceeding polite, indeed: I always finds de ladies very partial to me; I vas have de honour to be chose last week maister of de ceremony to de Mile-End assembly; and Mrs. Alderman herself make always choice of me for de cotillions.

Mrs. Fl. I make not the least doubt of your great success with the ladies.

Moses. Oh, madam!

Flaw. Mr. Manaffes, madam, is modest: The city? his success has not been confined to the city;

THE COZENER S. 15

city; many a heart-ach has he given, to men of consequence too, let me tell you, on this side the Bar.

Moses. Oh, fy, fy, maister Flaw!

Flaw. What! don't I know? did not you occasion the separation between Mrs. Modish of Marybone and her husband?

Moses. Oh, fy, fy! a flam, indeed, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Pooh! besides, was not you seen during all the last summer, lounging on horseback, through all the lone lanes about Chelsea and Fulham, with young lady Harrow-heart?

Moses. All scandal, upon my honour.

Flaw. Zounds! why, have not I heard the young fellows at Betty's, when you have been passing by with lady Kitty Carmine, in her new vis-a-vis, exclaim, "Look, look! there is Moses again! dammee, I can't conceive what the ladies can see in that pencil-felling, mongrel Manasses! Gad, I fancy he catches women, as people do quails, with his pipe."

Moses. Dat is all spite, all malice, on my honour!

Mrs. Fl. Pipe? what, does he sing?

Flaw. He? the voice of Squallache, with the taste and manner of Millico.

Moses

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Moses sings].

“ Ven saw you my fader ?

“ Ven saw you my moder ?

Mrs. Fl. I see, I see : Nay, then, I don't wonder.

Flaw. Besides all this, master Moses is an absolute Proteus ; in every elegance, at the top of the tree.

Mrs. Fl. Indeed ?

Flaw. From his present dress, you would think that all his days were spent in a drawing-room.

Mrs. Fl. Without doubt.

Flaw. But were you to see him on the turf, at Newmarket, in his Tyburn-topp'd wig, tight boots, and round hat, you would swear he had never handled any thing but a curry-comb since he was born. Why, he has rid matches.

Mrs. Fl. Really ?

Flaw. Many.

Moses. No, madam ; but vone, on my vord ; a match with Lord Billy Booty : I vas first, hard in hand on a canter ; my Lord came side by side, give a little bit of chuck vid de elbow, and pop me plump into de ditch of de Devil ; and de people all hollow !

Mrs.

Mrs. Fl. Brutes ! very unlucky indeed. But pray, Mr. Manasses, how can I serve you ? I should be happy to——

Moses. Why, madam, in vone vord—I should be glad to be as well wid de gentlemen as Mr. Flaw say I be wid de ladies ; and if, by your assistance, I could get into de Boodles, de Almacks, or vone of de clubs——

Mrs. Fl. Bless me ! is it possible that you are not a member ?

Moses. I vas often put up ; but dey always give me de black ball.

Mrs. Fl. Bless me ! what can be the meaning of that ?

Moses. I don't know ; perhaps my religion was de objection.

Mrs. Fl. I should hardly think them so squeamish as that : The dice are indeed often call'd Doctors ; but, by the large evacuation they cause, I should rather think them graduates of physic, than of divinity : No, no ; that can't be the case. Let me see !—perhaps you have had dealings with some of the club.

Moses. Yes ; I have de little annuity.

Mrs. Fl. Oh ho !—so you have been admitted into the Jerusalem-Chamber ?

Moses. Yes, yes, very often.

D

Mrs.

Mrs. Fl. Oh ! then the business is out ; there then is the reason at once.

Moses. How ?

Mrs. Fl. Some of the parties, I suppose, flow in their payments ?

Flaw. And there is nothing those gentlemen dread so much as meeting a dun there.

Mrs. Fl. But I dare say Mr. Manasses, at such a place, would be above dropping a hint.

Moses. Oh, fy ! madam, upon no account.

Mrs. Fl. Very well ! why then, I may venture to assure them as much ?

Moses. Sure, vidout doubt.

Flaw. But, however, madam, tho' some of the old dons should be crusty——

Mrs. Fl. To be sure, means might be used to get over that bar.

Flaw. Easy enough, I should think.

Mrs. Fl. Let us see ! stuffing the negative side of the box, that the black balls cannot descend.

Flaw. Or advancing or retarding the clock.

Mrs. Fl. True ; but then the waiters should be properly spoke to.

Flaw. Oh, I dare say Mr. Manasses does not mind, upon such an occasion.

Moses. Oh, not at all ; I am ready to part vid de money.

Flaw.

Flaw. I dare say. Why, do you consider that a feat there, as Mr. Manasses can manage——

Mrs. Fl. May turn out better for him, perhaps, than a borough.

Moses. Den I may rely upon you, madam?

Mrs. Fl. Give yourself no further trouble about it.

Moses. I have de honor, ma'am—— [*going.*]

Mrs. Fl. But should not Manasses make a deposit? [*Apart to Flaw.*]

Flaw. To be sure.—Mr. Manasses! well, Sir, I wish you joy, Sir: What, we are to have a lottery, I find?

Moses. Dat is all fixed; dere is no danger of dat. I think, madam, dere is no finer sight can be, dan to see de lottery-lanthorns hang up in de streets, vid large red letters, write on all sides; it is so noble!

Mrs. Fl. An elegant ornament, it must be confes'd, to a capital city: Besides, if the passion for play cannot be suppress'd, all that human wisdom can do, is to turn private vices to the use of the public.

Moses. True, true.

Flaw. I suppose you are an adventurer.

Moses. Ay, ay; I have my share, to be sure.

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'em was saying, that she had some thoughts of trying her fortune.

Moses. By all means ; I wish her much luck !

Flaw. If you should have any tickets about you——

Moses. Perhaps de lady may have de fancy to de particular number.

Flaw. No, no ; we are not superstitious as to the number ; it is the numbers we wish to get at.

Moses. Dere is, madam, a couple de sheets : Would you give de draft on de banker ? dey are at present mush above par. Let me see !

Flaw. Oh, as to the price, we don't trouble our heads about that ; we will settle that some other time ; make a deduction, you know, for what madam bestows upon the waiters.

Moses. True, true ! Well, madam, your most humble ! you may tell de club dat I shall make de very good member ; for now and den I love to play a little myself.

Mrs. Fl. You do ?

Moses. Yes ; to set de caster at hazard ; and hold de Pharoh-bank wid de cards.

Flaw. Be cautious, or you may meet with your match.

Moses. Never fear ! ven I vas play, I always do keep myself up for de purpose, like de fighting cock, or de horse.

Mrs. Fl.

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Mrs. Fl. Very right ; for intemperance upon such an occasion——

Moses. It would be de devil, as I eats so little, and drinks nothing at all.

Flaw. No ?

Moses. No, never at cards ; de claret would turn all topsy-turvey : no, no, I must take care not to drown Pharaoh again in de Red Sea.

[*Exit Manasses.*

Flaw. and Fl. Ha, ha, ha !

Mrs. Fl. Oh ! have you advertised an honourable feat to be sold ?

Flaw. I never neglect business, you know ; but the perpetuating this damn'd bribery-act has thrown such a rub in our way——

Mrs. Fl. New acts, like new brooms, make a little bustle at first ; but the dirt will return, never fear. What, have no offers been made ?

Flaw. A short note from a broker, who hopp'd out of the Alley, into a good estate in the North. By the first ships I expect some good subjects from the siege of Tanjore.

Mrs. Fl. A sure importation of candidates ; they come in good time, for in such a country as this, what signifies cash without consequence ?

Flaw. True ; which in order to get, what they acquire by conquest they expend in corruption.

Mrs.

22 THE COZENERS.

Mrs. Fl. Whilst perhaps a borough, pretty warmly contested, compels the unhappy hero to make a second trip to the East.—[*Knocking.*] Who can that be?

Flaw. Had not I better withdraw?

Mrs. Fl. First, see who it is.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Simony, madam, below in a chair.

Flaw. Shew her up, by all means.

Mrs. Fl. Simony?

Flaw. The Doctor's lady, about the living, you know.

Mrs. Fl. I remember; but I thought the Doctor himself a——

Flaw. A late mistake has made him a little cautious at present.

Mrs. Fl. A burnt child dreads the—But, pray, what kind of a woman is——

Flaw. An absolute gossip: Your share in the scene will be short: Let her run on; she neither expects, nor desires a reply. Here she is.

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. Madam, I am your obedient, and very devoted! Mr. Flaw, I am entirely yours! ten thousand

thousand pardons for waiting upon you in this dishabille ! but I stay'd so late last night at lady Lurch'em's assembly, that I have had but just time to huddle on my things ; and now I have not five minutes to spare, as I promis'd precisely at twelve to call on lady Frolic, to take a turn in Kensington-Gardens, to see both the exhibitions, the stain'd glass, dwarf, giant, and Cox's Museum. Mr. Flaw, I presume, has mentioned our little affair. The Doctor would have waited on you himself ; but men *bum*, and *ba*, and are so roundabout, awkward, and shy ! now I am always for coming plump to the point : Besides, women best understand one another, you know. But, as I was saying, the patron of the business in question is, as we understand, a near friend and relation of yours.

Mrs. Fl. Madam, I shall be happy to——

Mrs. Sim. Your patience, madam ! for I have not a moment to spare. Now, as it cannot be supposed that some people should do favours for other people, with which people those people are not acquainted, I am ready to advance—— for the Doctor knows nothing about it.

Mrs. Fl. How, madam ? I understood——

Mrs. Sim. The Doctor ? not he, I assure you, madam ; entirely ignorant, in every respect : Now, if such a favour can be obtain'd, I am
ready

ready to deposit, as Mr. Flaw has doubtless informed you——

Mrs. Fl. Why, I can't say, madam, but it is very handsome.

Mrs. Sim. Nay, madam, the party will lose no credit by doing what is desired : The Doctor's powers are pretty well known about town ; not a more populous preacher within the sound of Bow-bell ; I don't mean for the mobility only ; *those* every canting fellow can catch ; the best people of fashion ar'n't ashamed to follow my Doctor : Not one, madam, of the humdrum, drawling, long-winded tribe ; he never crams congregations, gives them more than they can carry away ; not above ten or twelve minutes at most.

Mrs. Fl. Indeed ?

Mrs. Sim. Even the dowager-duchess of Drowsy was never known to nod at my Doctor ; and then he doesn't pore, with his eyes close to the book, like a clerk that reads the first lesson ; not he ! but all extemporary, madam ; with a cambrick handkerchief in one hand, and a diamond ring on the other : And then he waves this way, and that way ; and he curtsies, and he bows, and he bounces, that all the people are ready to—— But then his wig, madam ! I am sure you must admire his dear wig ; not
with

THE COZENERS. 25

with the bushy, brown buckles, dangling and dropping, like a Newfoundland spaniel; but short, rounded off at the ear, to shew his plump cherry cheeks; white as a curd, feather-topped, and the curls as close as a cauliflower.

Mrs. Fl. Why really, madam——

Mrs. Sim. Then, my Doctor is none of your scismatics, madam; believes in the whole thirty-nine; and so he would, if there were nine times as many.

Mrs. Fl. Very obedient.

Mrs. Sim. Obedient! As humble and meek as a curate; does duly his duties; never scruples to bury, though it be but a tradesman—unless, indeed, he happens to be better engaged.

Mrs. Fl. Why, with all these good qualities, I should think our success must be certain.

Mrs. Sim. With your assistance, madam, I have not the least doubt in the world: So, madam, begging your pardon for having intruded so long, I leave Mr. Flaw and you to confer on the subject.—Not a step, I beseech you.—Lord bless me! I had like to have forgot: My memory, as the Doctor says, is so very tenacious, that it is not one time in twenty I can remember the text. Besides all I have said, my Doctor, madam, possesses a pretty little poetical

E

vein:

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vein: I have brought you here a little hymn in my pocket.

Mrs. Fl. Madam, you are very——

Mrs. Sim. Of which the Doctor desires your opinion.

Mrs. Fl. Hymn? then the Doctor sings, I presume.

Mrs. Sim. Not a better pipe at the playhouse; he has been long notorious for that: Then he is as chearful, and has such a choice collection of songs! why, he is constantly asked at the great city-feasts; and does, I verily believe, more in-door christnings than any three of the cloth. But this composition, madam, is of a different kind: It is but short; but if the party, your worthy friend and relation, should happen to like the manner of writing, he has a much longer one for his immediate perusal.—Madam, I am your obsequious, and very devoted—— Not a step, my good Mr. Flaw! my chairmen are, you know, in waiting. [Exit.

Mrs. Fl. A hymn? what the deuce can the woman mean by a hymn?—Let me see!—"Pro-
"mise to pay to the bearer one hundred pounds,
"for the governor and company"—Ay, marry, this is coming *plump to the business*: No man can deny, Mr. Flaw, but these lines are sterling.

If

T H E C O Z E N E R S. 27

If the Doctor's prose is as good as his poetry, I don't wonder he has so many admirers. But when shall I see you?

Flaw. Immediately after I have paid my provincials a visit.

Mrs. Fl. Oh, then I may have time to execute a little scheme of my own.

Flaw. Of what kind?

Mrs. Fl. One that will turn out both pleasant and profitable: You know the prim mercer, not far from St. Paul's?

Flaw. What, young Prig, that presents you an eternal attitude to all hacks of the city, and stands in stiff buckle before his own shop, like a sign?

Mrs. Fl. Even he.

Flaw. The fellow is a fop, to be sure; but you will not find it an easy matter to gull him; the coxcomb is suspicious and guarded.

Mrs. Fl. Against a common contrivance, perhaps; otherwise he would be no object for one of my original genius. Besides, there is a necessity for some new silks to grace my niece's nuptials, you know.

Flaw. True, true: Well, success attend you!

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Be in no pain about me. Who's there?

E 2

Enter

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Enter a Servant.

Order the carriage to the door; and do you and the coachman put on your best liveries.

Serv. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Fl. And, do you hear, John? if they should be inquisitive, where I stop, as to my place of abode, give 'em no information: I should be sorry to have it known, that one of my rank and fortune was pent up in a paltry lodging.

Serv. Your ladyship need be under no fears.

Mrs. Fl. If, at coming from the mercer's, where I shall go first, the master of the shop should get into the coach, drive to doctor Hellebore's, who you know is famous for curing of mad folks; the third door to the left in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Serv. I shall give the coachman directions.

Mrs. Fl. And, John! if any body should call in my absence, let them know that I am gone, with the countess of Carnaby, to see the preparations for the great trial in Westminster-Hall.

Serv. Mighty well, madam. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. Fl. That fellow has uncommon talents, for one of his station: What a matchless porter would he make to a great minister! for he lies like an attorney, and his muscles are as steady as those of his master. *[Exit.]*

A C T

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Bagnio. Enter Flaw followed by Tom.

Flaw.

HA V E not you a family here, that came lately out of the country?

Tom. I suppose you mean, Sir, Mr. Aircastle.

Flaw. I do; is the gentleman within?

Tom. In the back dining-room, up one pair of stairs.

Flaw. Will you let him know there is a person wishes to see him? If he wants to know my name——

Tom. I can tell him.

Flaw. Ay? why, have we been ever acquainted?

Tom. What! have you forgot Tom, master Flaw, at the Crown and Rolls in Chancery-Lane?

Flaw. I recollect. But I thought, by this time, you had set up for yourself: You seemed in a very good way.

Tom. Pretty well, master, for that part of the town: But, Lord, Sir, the penurious pence of the lawyers won't do for us, who are the superior knights of the napkin; after poring an hour over
a fix

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a fix and eight-penny bill, "Here, Tom, give us
"change! and mind, there is a groat for yourself:"
How was it possible to support a girl and a gelding
upon such a two-penny tax? it could not be.

Flaw. That is true, indeed.

Tom. No, no. So, dipping pretty deeply in
debt, I got a friendly commission of bankruptcy
to discharge my old scores, and removed to this
end of the town.

Flaw. Where you thrive, without doubt.

Tom. To give you a sample—It was but last
night, Sir Ralph Riot moved, that every man in
the club should give the waiter two guineas a-piece,
just by way of *surprising* the rascal.

Flaw. And it was carried?

Tom. Oh, *nem. con.*—the members never flinch
at a frolic.

Flaw. I wish you joy of your station!—But
pray, by what accident came the family above to
your house? There must have been some mistake
in the matter; for they are people of very good
reputation.

Tom. I can't guess. Only that the town is thin,
and business begins to grow dead, we should hardly
have given them admittance; they are a strange
unaccountable tribe: Pray who the deuce are they?

Flaw. A respectable family, from the county of
Wilts, with a very good landed estate, I assure you,

Tom.

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Tom. On which, I suppose, the 'squire condescends to kill his own meat; and madam, his lady, to dress it: Then it is one eternal wrangle between them, conducted in a language pretty near as coarse as their carter's.

Flaw. They have been bred in a state of Nature, Tom.

Tom. The husband, for once or twice, is entertaining enough: He sets out to inform you in a most material point, as he thinks, which he forsakes in an instant to follow some other circumstance, not material at all; this he soon quits for another, and soon for another, if you will give him attention. He puts me in mind of a pack of hounds in a hare-warren; by eternally shifting the game, the pursuit never ends.

Flaw. You have him, Tom; Mr. Aircastle is, I own, very prolix and digressive.

Tom. Unless I am mistaken, the son has an old acquaintance here in the house.

Flaw. Ay?

Tom. Miss Betsy Blossom, one of our ladies, who comes, I fancy, from their part of the world: She wishes to avoid the father and mother, but hints that she has good reason to remember the son.

Flaw. Perhaps so.

Tom. Madam the mother too, who is still a jolly brisk dame, seems determined to make the most of her time.

Flaw.

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Flaw. How so?

Tom. She has dispatched, this morning, a billet to Col. Gorget, an old master of mine.

Flaw. If they are at present alone, you will be so kind to announce me.

Tom. Those stairs lead to their door; there is no occasion for a master of the ceremonies.

[*Exit Flaw.*

Miss! Miss Betfy!

Enter Betfy.

Well; have you encountered your Corydon?

Betfy. No; I have carefully kept myself out of his way.

Tom. Then now throw yourself into it, as soon as you can; for, unless you prevent it, I can foresee a design to dispose of him in a very different manner.

Betfy. In the interim, I could wish to have him all to myself; no danger of an interruption from the father and mother.

Tom. Watch then when they are out of the way. But remember you run no risque in over-acting your part; treat him with a large dish of daggers, death, and despair.

Betfy. Never fear; I know how to proportion my dose.

Tom. Are you prepared with the two verses I gave you?

Betfy.

THE COZENERS. 31

Betsy. Yes, yes; and I warrant will thunder them with good effect in his ears.

Tom. Success attend you, my girl! [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to another room.

Mr. and Mrs. Aircastle discovered.

Air. Well, well, mark the end on't! this will turn out like all the rest of your projects.

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Mr. Aircastle, will you never give over your grumblings? I thought I had convinced you, before you left home, that London was the only spot for people to thrive in.

Air. Convinced me? Did not I tell you what parson Prunello said—I remember Mrs. Lightfoot was by—she had been brought to-bed, that day was a month, of a very fine boy—a bad birth; for Doctor Seeton, who served his time with Luke Lancet of Guise's—there was a talk about him and Nancy the daughter—she afterwards married Will Whitlow, another apprentice, who had great expectations from an old uncle in the Grenades; but he left all to a distant relation, Kit Cable, a midshipman aboard the Torbay—she was lost, coming home, in the Channel—the captain was taken up by a coaster from Kye, loaded with cheese——

Mrs. Air. Mercy upon me, Mr. Aircastle, at
F what

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what a rate you run on! What has all this to do with our coming to London?

Air. Why, I was going to tell you; but you will never have patience!

Mrs. Air. More than ever woman possessed. Would you, I say, be contented to spring, grow, and decay, in the same country spot, like a cabbage?

Air. Yes; provided I left behind me some promising sprouts.

Mrs. Air. What! have you no ambition? no soul? could you be easy to stand stock-still; whilst your neighbours are advancing all round you? Cottagers are become farmers; farmers are made justices; and folks that travelled barefoot to London, roll down again in their coaches and chariots; but still we stick!

Air. What then? For, as counsellor Crab said at the assizes—he came down to plead for Ned Nick'em, who won at Bath a large sum of Lord Luckless—the principal witness was Christopher Cogg'em—who was condemned to the pillory; but saved by Phil Fang the attorney—who——

Mrs. Air. What matters what any body said? but you are always flying from the——

Air. Why, what a pox would the woman be at?—Ha'n't I lopp'd off a handsome limb of
my

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my land to put your hopeful project in practice?

Mrs. Air. Well; and must not every body who ventures in the lottery of life first pay for his ticket?

Air. I believe Toby will hardly thank me for going into the wheel.

Mrs. Air. No; I suppose he would rather stay at home, and marry Bet Blossom: A pretty alliance he had like to have given us!

Air. But you know I drove the girl out of the parish.

Mrs. Air. Are there none of the same stamp left behind?

Air. Well, well, here we are, and what's to be done?

Mrs. Air. Our first business is to get Toby disposed of; upon your head, we will consult Mr. Flaw; as to my affairs, leave me to myself.

Air. And as for Toby, the best method, you think, will be——

Mrs. Air. To advertise the boy, to be sure.

Air. Do you think so? Advertise Toby? I was once told by Tom Type, a printer of one of the papers—he was tried for a libel before Sir Philip Flogg'em, at the Old-Bailey—two of the jury died that sessions of the distemper—doctor Drybones recommended vinegar by way

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of prevention—the Doctor wore the strangest black wigs!—they were made by Ben Block'em, of Bow-Street—I dined with him once, when he was churchwarden, upon two bastard children—we had a haunch of venison—the venison was over-roasted, and stunk—but doctor Dewlap twisted down such gobs of fat——

Mrs. Air. But what is all this to the purpose?

Air. I was going to tell you, if you would but listen a bit!

Mrs. Air. What did Type say?

Air. That he never knew any good come of that kind of——

Mrs. Air. Then Type was a fool! don't we see by the news, that there is no other way of making matches in London?

Air. Well, well—you know best, to be sure.

Mrs. Air. Here the advertisement is; I have penned it myself.

Air. You penned it? Damn me, if she can spell a single syllable of the language!

Mrs. Air. Call the boy in; and observe, Mr. Aircastle, if he corresponds with the marks.

Air. Toby! [Calling,

Enter Toby.

Lord, Mrs. Aircastle, how you have altered the boy! why, his face is as long as a fiddlestick!

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stick! and then he has a bundle at his back, as big as a child!

Mrs. Air. Pray, Mr. Aircastle, mind your own business, I beg! would you have him dressed like yourself, in a suit of cloaths made thirty years ago, when you were sheriff for the county?—Toby, stand forth! “Wanted, for a young gentleman of an ancient family, and agreeable person”—Toby, hold up your head!

Toby. I does, mother, I does.

Air. It is impossible, my dear, the boy should ever walk in that manner; why, he will run against every body he meets. Toby, do you think you can step without stumbling?

Toby. Not in the streets; but cross a room pretty well, I believe.

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, have you no idea of grace? Shoulders back, Toby; and chest a little more out!

Air. Now, child, look at his elbows! you have pinioned him down like a pickpocket.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Mr. Aircastle, grace.

Air. Grace? he has neither grace, nor grease; his breast-bone sticks out like a turkey's.

Mrs. Air. Nothing but grace! I wish you would read some late Posthumous Letters; you would then know the true value of grace: Do you know that the only way for a young man

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to thrive in the world, is to get a large dish of hypocrisy, well garnished with grace, an agreeable person, and a clear patrimonial estate?—

“A wife with a very large portion: If the fortune answers, proper allowance will be made for person and mind. The party, and his rent-roll, may be seen at the Lamb in Long-Acre, every hour of the day.”

Air. Why, this will bring the whole town to the house.

Mrs. Air. That is just what I intend; the more bidders, the better.

Enter Tom and Flaw.

Tom. Mr. Flaw. [*Exit.*

Flaw. Good folks, you are welcome to London!

Air. Ay, here we are, Mr. Flaw; here's Toby too.

Toby. Yes, here I am, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Bless me! what a change! I should scarce have known him.

Toby. Yes, I suppose I am pretty much altered, being garnished with grace.

Air. Ay; a grace, I believe, that will tempt nobody to taste of the dish.

Mrs. Air. Never mind him, Mr. Flaw; he is a desponding creature, you know. But, as a proof that we have not been idle, here is the first fruits of my labour.

Flaw.

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Flaw. What is it?

Mrs. Air. An advertisement to procure a partner for Toby.

Flaw. A parther?

Mrs. Air. Ay, a wife, with a suitable fortune.

Flaw. I hope it is not sent to the papers.

Toby. What, the notice where I am to be seen? here it is in my hand.

Mrs. Air. Give it me; and go you out, and wait 'till you are wanted: And don't listen! d'ye hear? And, Toby, be mindful of grace! and, d'ye hear? don't laugh! you may grin, indeed, to shew your teeth, and your manners.

Toby. Will that do?

Mrs. Air. Pretty well, for the first time.

[*Exit Toby.*]

Flaw. Bless me, madam! how could such a thought——

Mrs. Air. Don't we every day see such things in the news?

Flaw. Ay, from an old maid in despair, a broken millener, or a tottering tobacconist.

Air. I told her so, Mr. Flaw: Zounds, says I, you treat the boy as if he was a white bear, or an ostrich—though it is quite a mistake, Mr. Flaw, that those creatures eat iron: I saw one once at the Checquer at Salisbury—the keeper's name was Evan Thomas, a Welshman—he had
but

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but one hand—he lost the other, endeavouring to steal a piece of cheese out of a rat-trap—the trap went down; and——

Mrs. Air. Did ever mortal see such a man?

Air. And, zounds, why must not I speak? she likes to listen to no sounds but her own; but I will be heard, and——

Mrs. Air. And so you shall, when you talk to the purpose.

Air. Purpose, madam? Damn it, I would have you to know——

Flaw. Oh, fy, fy, good people! curb your cholers a little: Consider you are not now in the country.

Air. Well, well, I am calm.

Flaw. Then, to return to our business: Besides, my good madam, I had provided a match that would have completed all our matters at once.

Mrs. Air. How?

Flaw. A lady, an acquaintance of mine, lately arrived with her niece from the Indies——

Mrs. Air. And rich?

Flaw. Enough to purchase the sceptre of Poland.

Air. How!

Flaw. Ay, even before his very good neighbours had brought that monarchy down to a manor.

Air.

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Air. And pray, as to the party?

Flaw. Fleece'em is the name of the aunt; not much indebted to fortune; but whoever is happy enough to marry the niece, won't scruple, I dare say, to procure her a proper provision.

Mrs. Air. The most reasonable thing in the world.

Flaw. I ventured to promise as much.

Mrs. Air. Then you have hinted the business?

Flaw. As good as concluded. As marriage-bonds are illegal, it will be right to make a deposit before the solemnization.

Mrs. Air. To be sure. Now, Mr. Aircraftle, I hope I was right; for seeing a little cash might promote our designs, I got him to sell Sycamore-farm, and we have brought the money to town.

Flaw. How much might the——

Mrs. Air. Five thousand.

Flaw. But, with a few diamonds, for which I will get you credit——

Mrs. Air. By all means.—When should we wait on the young lady?

Flaw. This very morning; we cannot be too quick; some of the young blades about town begin to have an inkling, I fear; I observe them throw their eyes up to the windows.

Mrs. Air. Without doubt. Mr. Aircraftle,

G

you

you will go out to the shops, and provide Toby with a new Beckford-hat and a couteau du chaffe?

Flaw. And purchase at the same time some presents for the young lady.

Mrs. Air. The first time?

Flaw. Always the rule in the East; you never approach a superior without a suitable present.

Mrs. Air. No?

Air. No? why, fool, that is the way the Nabobs have got all their wealth—I knew one of them once; and, if he had not been so rich, really a good sort of a—he was inoculated for the small-pox, by one of the Suttons, at the great house by Hyde-Park—the builder of it got into the Bench, and was afterwards cleared by an act of insolvency—though Tom Jenkins, one of his creditors——

Mrs. Air. You see!—Lord bless me now, Mr. Aircraftle, how can you, when we have not a moment to lose—Go, go out with the boy, I beseech you!

Air. Well, well, well! [Going.

Flaw. I'll run before, and prepare Mrs. Fleece'em.

Mrs. Air. By all manner of means.

Air. Pray, is not the toy-shop at the end of the street, kept by the son of—I remember I met the father once at Newmarket—he was in
a one-

THE COZENERS. 43

a one-horse chaise, made by Varnish here in Long-Acre—who built a state-coach for the Empress of Russia—he was recommended by Lord—I can't think of his name—who was chosen one of the sixteen for the kingdom of—

Mrs. Air. Take him with you, dear Mr. Flaw!

Flaw. Come, Sir, I will shew you the shop.

[*Exeunt Aircastle and Flaw.*]

Mrs. Air. So! having provided for Toby, I am at leisure to attend to my own private concerns. Who's there?

Enter Maid-Servant.

Bid the Waiter come up! [*Exit Maid.*]

If colonel Gorget answers my letter in the way I expect, it will prove a pretty good beginning: The colonel, I make no doubt, knows the ways of the world, and will soon take the hint: He was vastly struck with me during the races; and I don't see why I have not as good a right to profit by my person, as I am told some ladies do, who live in this——

Enter Waiter.

Well, Sir, what return to my letter?

Waiter. The colonel, madam, will obey your commands.

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Mrs. Air. Very well! when he comes, shew him into the next room. [*Exeunt.*]

Another Room in the Bagnio.

Enter Colonel Gorget, reading a letter.

Gorget. Bravo, bravo, my sweet country acquaintance! this is a rendezvous, with a witness. Let me see! *Um, um, um!* “Unexpectedly brought by business to town—no time to make a proper provision—accommodate me with Five Hundred Guineas”—accommodate! an apt phrase, and a pretty sum too; but how the deuce could the woman suppose that I was able to advance such a sum? *Um, um!*—“Not prove ungrateful—Elizabeth”—Oh, ho! now I begin to conceive.—Stay! who have we here? Zooks! the husband himself.

Enter Aircastle.

Air. What, colonel Gorget!

Gorget. Mr. Aircastle, I am happy to see you! But what important business can have brought you to London?

Air. Some family affairs, and to lay out a pretty large sum, which I lately got for a parcel of land.—But is this visit intended to me?

Gorget. No; I was quite a stranger to your being

being in town. A lady in the house, that I lately knew in the country——

Air. What, from our part of the world?

Gorget. No, no; but a devilish fine woman: Last summer some little gallantries past between us below.

Air. Ay, ay; you officers play the very deuce when you come down into the country. I remember ensign Sash, about ten years ago—his father came from Barbadoes—I met him at Treacle's, the great sugar-baker's, who had a house in St. Mary-Axe—he took the lease from alderman Gingham, who served sheriff with deputy—there was tight work on the hustings—

Gorget. Oh, the devil! he runs on at the old rate.—But we forget the lady.

Air. Oh, ay; “Gallantry with her below;” which I suppose you have finished above.

Gorget. No, faith, not entirely, my friend; but I think we are in a fair way.

Air. Ay?

Gorget. The garrison has offered to surrender.

Air. Then what prevented you from taking possession?

Gorget. The governor, as usual, insists on a bribe, which it was not immediately in my power to pay——

Air. Damn those governors!—why, there was
the

the governor of Bergen-op-zoom, in the last war——

Gorget. But hear me!—I was just stepping home to provide the credentials; but, however, this lucky meeting will, I flatter myself, put an end to my journey.

Air. As how?

Gorget. If you will supply me with the sum till evening, I shall close the bargain without quitting the house.

Air. How much?

Gorget. Five hundred guineas.

Air. Five hundred guineas? what a cormorant the woman must be!

Gorget. Not at all, when her husband is rich, and she is above accepting a trifle.

Air. Now, I should have thought that would have made her more reasonable.

Gorget. Quite the reverse; why, did you ever know a wealthy courtier accept of a moderate pension?

Air. That, indeed—But are you really serious?

Gorget. So serious, that if you will lend me the money——

Air. Nay, but, colonel, that is——

Gorget. Nay, but if you hesitate——

Air. No, it is not that; the money is quite at
your

your service; but you will repent, and then reproach me—What! five hundred? there can be no woman worth it.

Gorget. You would alter your tone, if you saw her.

Air. Should I? Prithee tell me her name; perhaps I may know her.

Gorget. I durst not; you know my honour is concerned.

Air. Honour with such a woman as that?

Gorget. She is very well known.

Air. And ought to be better.

Gorget. But I waste time, and may lose the critical minute: Will you supply me, or must I—

Air. With the greatest pleasure in life: Here is in this bag the very sum, which I have just received for a draft in the city.

Gorget. Ten thousand thanks, my dear Mr.—

Air. I can't say tho', but I am sorry——

Gorget. Oh, it is not impossible but I may come off at an easier rate: With such a capital in hand, one may haggle, you know.

Air. True, true; I'd endeavour to get her for nothing: Chouse her, chouse her! do, colonel. If indeed she had asked for a ring with a poesy, or any such trifle as that—but such a monstrous demand! I would give something to see her.

Gorget.

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Gorget. Why, it is my opinion you know who she is.

Air. Really?

Gorget. Now if it should turn out that you had been happy with the lady yourself, would not that greatly surprise you?

Air. Me? ha, ha, ha! the deuce a bit: Tho', when I came first to the Temple, there was a lawyer's wife that lived in Quality-Court, that I was exceedingly fond of—her husband came home one night, and I crept under the bed, where I should have remained concealed, but for a little dog of Charles's breed; he went *bow, wow, wow*—

Gorget. Oh, the devil!—But consider, time presses; I must away to the lady.

Air. True, true; and I to the shops with my boy. And I happy with the—ha, ha, ha—However, if that be the case, colonel, it is a stronger reason for closing your purse-strings; for the devil take me if I ever knew a woman who was deserving a tythe of that sum in my life!—Yes; I lie! I did; a Greek girl, they called Circassian—I saw her at Tunbridge—where, by the bye, they have the oddest pantile walk—with the musick on a shelf—and as the company walk to and fro, the fiddlers go *tal, lal, la*——

Gorget. Nay, but—[*pushing him out*]. This is lucky beyond expectation; what a civilized husband, to supply me with the very money I wanted!

Enter

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Enter Tom.

Is the lady at leisure?

Tom. She knows her husband is gone out, and will be with you this instant.

Gorget. Very well! take care, and watch his return.

Tom. Here she is. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Aircastle.

Mrs. Air. What, you are come, my dear colonel! I have waited for you with the utmost impatience.

Gorget. And I, madam, have flown to obey your commands.

Mrs. Air. No more of that, colonel, I beg: I blush to consider——

Gorget. Blush? and why so, madam?

Mrs. Air. At what you must think of my letter: But the high sense I entertain of your friendship, induced me, in such an exigence, to make the trial.

Gorget. And the wisest step you could take.

Mrs. Air. Pardon me, Sir! I am not to learn how dangerous it is to have an obligation to you.

Gorget. And why so? Can there be any thing more natural than to desire the assistance of the

H person

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person who loves us? Of my attachment I hope you have no reason to doubt.

Mrs. Air. That, Sir, is the very source of my sorrow, and has determined me to support every evil; nay, to apply even to Mr. Aircastle himself, rather than——

Gorget. How, madam! then it is plain I have lost your esteem. Fool that I was, to be lulled by the bewitching lines of your letter! I thought that I had detected Love, that sly lurcher, lurking under the mask of confidential—But now I unfortunately find how far I am from your favour.

Mrs. Air. Cruel, unjust colonel Gorget!

Gorget. Ha! am I unjust? you revive me! you restore me to—But banish every thought of an obligation to any but me; I should be jealous of——

Mrs. Air. But really, colonel, the sum is——

Gorget. Of no importance at all; a mere trifle; just nothing: I shall not feel it, believe me.

Mrs. Air. How can I be too grateful for such a generous proof of your friendship? Sure you were born to——

Enter Toby.

What the deuce has brought that booby back!

[*Aside.*

Toby.

Toby. Father desires you would call in your way, and take him up at the sword-cutler's.

Gorget. How ! the young cub ? This is lucky beyond expectation !—Here, madam, are the five hundred guineas, which you will be kind enough to pay, with my thanks, to Mr. Aircastle, your husband.

Mrs. Air. Finely taken and turned ; what infinite wit and contrivance ! [*aside.*]—But would it not be right, colonel, just to sign a receipt ?

Gorget. Unnecessary, madam ; but just as you please.

Mrs. Air. There is pen and ink in the room over head.

Gorget. Give me leave to conduct you.

[*Exeunt Gorget and Mrs. Air.*]

Toby. I don't understand what father and mother's about. Here am I dizen'd, and skewer'd, and graced, just like a young colt that is a-breaking : Nay, they were going to advertise me too, as if I was really a horse ; but lawyer Flaw has made them alter their minds, and I am to be disposed of by private contract, I think. I can't say that I am over-fond of their ways, Oh, poor Betsy Blossom ! let them match me to whoever they will, I shall never love any like thee : I believe I should have put an end to their project, if I could but have found—Hey ! who

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is this? Mercy on me! sure it must be her ghost! and yet that can't be; because ghosts, they say, never comes but at night. Betsy?

Enter Betsy Blossom.

Betsy. Master Toby?

Toby. But is it possible? can it be you?

Betsy. As you see.

Toby. Well, and how? Lord, I have ten thousand questions to ask you. Where hast been? how dost do? how comest here? Why, you are vast fine, Betsy, all of a sudden; you be not married?

Betsy. Married? no, no; you have put that out of my power, you know.

Toby. Me? how so, Mrs. Betty?

Betsy. Is that a question now to be asked? have you so soon forgot what has happened between us?

Toby. No, no; I remember some part pretty well, I believe: But you cannot come for to go for to say, that we ever went to church together, in that there way you mean.

Betsy. That ceremony, Mr. Toby, you know well, was all that was wanting——

Toby. Besides, it could not be, Mrs. Betsy; because why, as father says, since the parliament-house interfered, it is against the law to marry for love.

Betsy.

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Betsy. How! what, are all your vows, oaths, promises, forgot? does not this sixpence, broken between us, when we last met in the grove, stare you full in the face?

Toby. Yes; I have t'other half in my pocket.

Betsy. Does not your conscience, Mr. Toby, upbraid you? But men are all traitors alike! their whole study is to delude poor innocent maids. Oh! why did I trust that fair face and flattering tongue, and not suspect the wily serpent that was lurking beneath?

Toby. Nay, Betsy——

Betsy. But my prayers are granted, however; my only wish was to see you once more——

Toby. My sweet, dear, little Betsy——

Betsy. Once more to survey that sweet form; the business of life is now over! Eyes, take your last look! open, thou cold earth, to receive me——

Toby. Lord have mercy! if you don't frighten me out of my wits.

Betsy. To thy dreary mansion I come! there my sorrows will cease, and my shame, and name, be forgot by the unpitying—Oh! [*Faints.*

Toby. Stop, stop, dearest Betsy, and take me along with you! Murder, fire, water! Waiter! what, will nobody come to assist her?

Enter

Enter Tom.

Tom. Bless me, Sir! what can be the matter?

Toby. Why, here is a poor young creature at her last gasp: Clap her hand, and bend her forward a bit!

Tom. Miss Betsey? Mercy on us! how came this about? It is only a fit; she revives, her eyes begin to open a little.

Betsey. Where am I?

Toby. In the fore-room, up one pair of stairs.

Tom. Bless me, Sir, what can be the occasion of this?

Toby. Why, it is a young woman that is breaking her heart.

Tom. Her heart? and for what?

Toby. Why, for love of me, to be sure.

Tom. And can you be such a barbarian? why, you must have the heart of a tiger, to stand unshocked at such a horrible scene.

Toby. Nay, I have been shocked enough, if that is all.

Tom. Then why don't you remove her distress?

Toby. Why, she wants me to marry her.

Tom. And is that all she asks; and can you hesitate for such a trifle as that?

Toby. Why, how can I, when father and
mother

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mother have promised me to an Indian woman, as rich as a Jew, from beyond sea?

Betsy. How! and have I a rival? perjured monster! But think not my death shall finally close our account; my shade, like Margaret's grimly ghost, shall pursue thee, haunt thee in dreams at midnight, shake thy curtains round thy guilty head, and holloa in thine ear!

*Bethink thee, Toby, of thy fault,
Thy pledge and broken oath;
And give me back my maiden vow,
And give me back my troth.*

Toby. Take it with you, Mrs. Betty, whenever you please.

Betsy [*Sings*].

*For this I'll haunt thy midnight dreams,
And hover round thy bed;
Thy ears I'll fill with horrid screams,
Nor leave thee till thou'rt dead.*

Toby. Why, you won't go to be so cruel, I hope! what, is there no amends to be made?

Tom. So, Sir, you see, dead or alive, she is determined to plague you.

Toby. Yes, yes; I see it well enough. Lord, who could have thought it? she is mightily changed since her coming to London.

Tom.

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Tom. This town is apt to open the mind.

Toby. Is it? I hope it will shut again, though, when she gets into the country. But pray, Mr. What-d'ye-call-em, by what chance did Betsey come here?

Tom. My mistress took her in, out of compassion: It is wonderful how charitable a lady she is! why, we have five or six more young women here in the same situation.

Toby. Indeed? she must be the most goodest woman on earth: Well, if she don't go to Heaven, what chance has such a poor creature as I?

Tom. None at all, unless you repair the wrongs she has suffered.

Toby. But if I was minded to comply with her wish, I don't see how I can bring it about?

Tom. You are one-and-twenty, no doubt?

Toby. These three years and above.

Tom. And Miss?

Toby. Within a twelvemonth of me.

Tom. Oh, then I will manage matters, I warrant. Where are you going?

Toby. To call on father, at a shop near the old black man a-horseback; the wind has blown his hat from his head.

Tom. Very well! Give them the slip as soon as you can; run back here; you will find us—

Betsey.

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Betsy. What, is he a-going? oh!

Toby. Nay, Betsy, be quiet! ben't I ready to do all that you want? If you faint any more, I wish I may die if I'll have you.

Betsy. Won't you?

Toby. No.

Tom. Courage, Miss! keep up your——

Toby. Right, Mr. —— or, if she must faint, can't she wait a little, till I get out of the house?

[*Exit.*

Tom. He is off: Finely managed! Do not stir from hence: I will run to the Commons, and be back again in a— One kiss, as a reward for the part I have——

Enter Toby.

Toby. I forgot to ask, Sir, where I should——

Tom. Run! here, Sir! she is fainting again!

Toby. Is she? then call somebody else, for I will make the best of my way—— [Exit.

Tom and Betsy. Ha, ha, ha! [Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em and Prig.

Mrs. Fleece'em.

IT is lucky the Doctor is at home [*aside*]. John, you may take the filks of Mr. Prig, and put them into the coach.—How could I be so giddy to forget my purse, and leave it on the table? All my servants are honest, I hope.

Prig. No doubt; it would be the greatestest of crimes, to injure a lady of your affability and aimiability.

Mrs. Fl. Quite polite, I protest, Mr. Prig! I am sorry, however, Sir, to have given you all this trouble.

Prig. I consider it, madam, as one of the most greatestest pieces of happiness that could have befallen Paul Prig. Your la'ship is a perfect pattern of humility: To suffer a simple tradesman like me to occupy part of your la'ship's coach, is such an honour that——

Mrs. Fl. Honour? by no means, Mr. Prig: I don't know a station more useful, or indeed more reputable, than that of a citizen like you,
who

who condescends to employ his genius in adorning his fellow-creatures. The ladies, indeed, are most obliged to your labours.

Prig. Were all ladies like you, madam, my condition would be celestial indeed; for, as Master Shakspur says,

“ The labour we delight in physicks pain.”

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Prig, I protest you surprize me! who could have expected so much gallantry from the Ward of Farringdon-Within?

Prig. Your charms, madam, would animate even a native of Hockley in the Hole!

Mrs. Fl. Fy, Mr.—

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My master begs you would step into his study. [Exit.

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Prig, you will excuse me a moment: It is lucky my lawyer is at home; I shall take the money, and not give you the trouble to go so far as my house. I shall soon call again at your shop. [Exit.

Prig. The greatest pleasure, madam, that I could ever have.—Ha, ha! left her purse on the table? a likely story, indeed! No, no; I understand her ogles and leers; her eyes spoke more truth than her tongue. I don't recollect to have seen her before; but she has seen me, that is clear,

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from the strength of her passion. "Soon call at
"your shop?" and how soft the tone of her
voice! Yes, yes; I believe you will. Well, well,
you sha'n't be disappointed, my dear; his worst
enemies can't accuse Paul Prig of being cruel.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. You had better step into this room;
there is a fire.

Prig. By all means. "A station more useful,
"or more reputable, than that of a"—poor
creter! she must be very far gone indeed. [*Exeunt.*

Another Room.

Doctor Hellebore and Mrs. Fleece'em discovered.

Helle. To whose recommendation, madam, do
I owe the honour——

Mrs. Fl. The world's, doctor; your great
reputation.

Helle. Oh, madam!

Mrs. Fl. But, as I was observing to you, Sir,
if it was not for these unaccountable whims in
my uncle, no man in England has a finer under-
standing, or a clearer conception: Nothing irre-
gular in his conduct; discharges all the social
duties with the utmost exactness; reasons with the
most perfect precision upon every subject.

Helle. And the state of his bodily health?

Mrs. Fl. He does not complain.

Helle.

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Helle. And these distractions are frequent?

Mrs. Fl. I think more so, of late.

Helle. Ay, the great tension of the Pia-mater must enfeeble the system; and the paroxysms, of course, oftener repeated, and of longer continuance. And his whims, you say——

Mrs. Fl. To the last degree extravagant: Last week he supposed himself a young nestling crow, and constantly opened his mouth, like a bill, and cawed for food, when he found himself hungry.

Helle. A manifest mark of distraction!

Mrs. Fl. His whim of to-day is peculiar enough.

Helle. Of what kind?

Mrs. Fl. He supposes himself a mercer upon Ludgate-Hill.

Helle. A mercer?

Mrs. Fl. And that he has sold me a parcel of silks, for the payment of which I have conducted him hither.

Helle. Why, madam, we do now and then meet with extraordinary instances: But could not I see your uncle?

Mrs. Fl. I brought him hither on purpose.

Helle. [*calling.*] Desire the gentleman below to walk up. Why, madam, the goodness of his health we look upon as a bad symptom, in these kind of of cases; when they arise from a fever, why——

Mrs. Fl.

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Mrs. Fl. I hope there will be no occasion for violent remedies, such as correction, or straight waistcoats?

Helle. Not if he is tractable.

Mrs. Fl. But if that should not be the case, Sir?

Helle. The best way, ma'am, is to leave him to my care a little: I have a convenient house not far from town, where mad people are managed with greater advantage.

Mrs. Fl. I shall submit his treatment entirely to you.—But I suppose, Sir, it will be right for me to withdraw, as you may have some questions to ask him, improper for the ear of a lady. I will pay a short visit, now I am in this part of the town.

Helle. As you please, madam.—A discreet person! this does not seem to be a family complaint.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Fl. Here he is. I must humour him a little.

Enter Prig.

This gentleman, Sir, will settle our little affair. Depend upon it, I shall be with you soon. [*Exit.*

Prig. I shall wait for that honour with the greatest impatience.—She is a fine creter!

Helle. Come, Sir, take a chair.

Prig. Sir, there is no occasion.

Helle.

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Helle. You had better, as I shall have a good many questions to ask you.—[*They sit.*] Well, Sir, and how do you find yourself?

Prig. Sir, you are very obliging! I am, I thank you, in very good health.

Helle. Don't you feel yourself at times inclined to be feverish?

Prig. Feverish! not I, Sir.

Helle. And have you had no material complaints, for any time back?

Prig. Not that I recollect; a slight touch of the *influenza*, indeed; but fared full as well as my neighbours.

Helle. And your appetite?

Prig. As usual; but I am at no time an over-great eater.

Helle. So much the better. Favour me with your hand, if you please.

Prig. Sir! [*Rises, and offers his hand.*]

Helle. Keep your seat, if you please.—[*Feels his pulse.*] Rather a little too lively! And as to your sleep now, is it continued or broken?

Prig. Sir!

Helle. Are your slumbers without interruption? have you no starts?

Prig. Not that I know of; indeed, I never was over-fond of my bed.

Helle. Ay, restless; I thought so.

Prig.

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Prig. Indeed, my business requires that I should be an early riser; when an apprentice, I was always the first in the shop.

Helle. An apprentice? poor man! but, however, I see no violent symptoms at present; a preparatory medicine, till we can put him into a regimen. Be seated! I will fetch you a draught that will immediately settle the business. [*Exit.*

Prig. A draft!—A draft on his banker, I reckon: Why could not he have given it me at first? An odd man! what the deuce has my health to do with my bill? Let us see; what is the tote? A hundred and ninety-two pounds, six, and—oh! here he is, I suppose, with the check.

Enter Hellebore, with a bottle and phial.

Helle. You will take this draught, three times a-day, at two hours' distance, first shaking it well.

Prig. Sir?

Helle. And nine drops of this, in a glass of water, first going to bed; it will serve to compose——

Prig. Compose? here must be some mistake in this matter! I fancy, Sir, you take me for somebody else—my name, Sir, is Prig; I keep the great mercer's shop, as you go up Ludgate——

Helle. Hum! very well, Sir.

Prig. And am come with the lady below, to be paid this here bill in my hand.

Hille.

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Helle. Oh, Sir, I am no stranger to the whole of that story: But how could you now—for, as you are cool at present, I will reason the matter a little—how could a man of your rank and fortune, indulge such an improbable whim?—I say a mercer indeed!

Prig. And pray, good Sir, who d'ye take me to be?

Helle. Oh, Sir, I know very well; your niece has fully informed me.

Prig. My niece? I have no niece; at least, not in London, I am sure.

Helle. No? what d'ye think of the lady who conducted you hither?

Prig. She my niece? Damn me, Sir, till this morning, if ever I set eyes on her! Sure——

Helle. Oh, ho! what, you are beginning to be violent: You had better be quiet, or I shall find a method to tame you.

Prig. Tame me, Sir? I don't understand what you would be at! Will you pay me my bill here, or not?

Helle. Your bill? poor creature!

Prig. Poor creter, Sir? none of your *poor* *creters* to me! follow your client's directions, and discharge me at once.

Helle. My client?

Prig. Ay, Sir. When money is in the case,

K

a man

Hille.

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a man may as well have to do with Old Nick; as a lawyer; there is no getting it out of their hands.

Helle. Oh, he takes me for a lawyer. The paroxism is exceedingly strong. Who is there? Order a coach, and let the three keepers convey him to Chelsea.

Enter Three Keepers.

Prig. Me to Chelsea? let any body touch me that dare!

Helle. Ay, ay, we will see that.

Prig. This is some conspiracy, I suppose, to bam, to chouse me out of my money.

Helle. You will take him to Chelsea.

Prig. Hands off!

Helle. And, as you see he is violent, let him have the back room, with the barr'd windows, up two pair of stairs.

Prig. Me to Chelsea? me barr'd windows, and back room two-pair of stairs?

Helle. If the fit should encrease, put on the streight waistcoat. I shall call myself in the evening.

Prig. Let me go, gentlemen! This is a damn'd contrivance, to rob me! Unhand me, or you shall be all swing'd and fous'd! imprison a citizen, that only comes for his money? Damn me,
Jack

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Jack Wilkes's affair will be but a flea-bite to this!

[Keepers hurry him off.

Helle. If this is the case, on with the waistcoat.

[Exeunt,

SCENE II.

Enter Fleece'em and Flaw.

Flaw. Ha, ha, ha! poor Prig! in what a piteous plight have you left him!—But the Air-castles will all be here immediately, so take care we are not interrupted.

Mrs. Fl. As they are so exceedingly credulous, the business will soon be dispatched.

Flaw. In a trice. I have stipulated that your provision shall be secured before the solemnization.

Mrs. Fl. Right, right; perfectly right.

Flaw. But have you properly prepared the girl for the purpose?

Mrs. Fl. Her part will be easy.

Flaw. True; but she should be adroit; as events may arise, that will require some little skill: Who the deuce have you got?

Mrs. Fl. Why, I considered that as a very ticklish point; it would be dangerous to trust, and difficult to find in this town a suitable subject: Don't you think that the black girl I brought with me from Boston——

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Flaw. The negro? zounds, her complexion will betray her at once!

Mrs. Fl. I have thought of an expedient to secure us from that.

Flaw. It is true, these people have no great penetration; but what we do——

Mrs. Fl. Must quickly be done: I will just speak to the girl. [*Calls.*] Marianne!

Enter Marianne.

Mar. What you want, Missy?

Mrs. Fl. Go in and throw yourself on the bed; and, do you hear? let the window be shut, and the curtains drawn exceedingly close.

Mar. Yes, Missy.

Mrs. Flee. And whoever speaks to you, don't you chatter and talk, but sigh now and then, as if you were sick: You will be only asked a question or two; as, *if you are ill?* or *are better?* to which you need say nothing but *yes*.

Mar. Nothing but *ifs*. I take care, Missy, never you fear.

Mrs. Flee. And, Marianne, no candle!

Mar. No, no, Missy. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Oh, she will answer our purpose, I warrant: Besides, unless they are very pressing to see her, there will be no occasion to produce her at all.

Flaw.

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Flaw. But, I beg your pardon, there will: by my directions, the son is provided with presents, with a view to propitiate his Venus.

Mrs. Fl. [*rap at the door.*] There they are! Mr. Flaw, you will receive them? It will be right for me to retire, to see if all things within are in order. [*Exit.*]

Enter Aircraftle, Mrs. Aircraftle, and Toby.

Air. I tell you the boy is an absolute sight, and I should not wonder if the young lady was to——

Mrs. Air. You wonder? and pray who made you a judge of the proper——

Flaw. Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake, hush! consider where you are!

Air. She is at her old tricks, Mr. Flaw; there is no——

Flaw. A key lower, good Sir, if you please! You will frighten the family.

Air. By her good will, I should never open my mouth, but to eat.

Mrs. Air. I know but little else that it's good for.

Flaw. Nay, madam, now you are as faulty as he. Only think what a strange impression this will make on the ladies within! I beg you will suspend your warfare a while.

Mrs. Air. Well, well!

Flaw.

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Flaw. And no contradiction, I beg; but be attentive and polite to each other, as people of fashion should be: You may renew hostilities, and make up for lost time, as soon as you are out of the house.

Mrs. Air. Why, how is it my fault, Mr. Flaw?

Air. Nor shall it be mine: For man and wife to quarrel before folks is rather rudish, I own; by ourselves, indeed, it is a pretty innocent amusement enough—Tom Testy, of our town, used to say—his wife was a Devonshire girl; if I am not mistaken, from Plymouth—where, by the bye, they have the best John Dories in England—Old Quin, one summer, went thither on purpose——

Flaw. And if, Mr. Aircastle, you would contract your conversation a little—To be sure, your manner is pleasing, and your matter full of instruction; but as we meet upon business—

Air. I believe you are right, Mr. Flaw. Come, my love; let us shew him how polite we can be, if we please.—Dear Mrs. Aircastle, how I admire your taste! these here skirts of the boy's are so light and genteel, and so airy—

Mrs. Air. True; I am happy, my dear, that I have your approbation: Those we got made in the country, trapees and dangle like a parcel of petticoats,

Air,

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Air. Right, my love.—For all the world, like a Hounslow post-boy! His whole figure is just like a spider, nothing but legs; a mere couple of stilts!—And then that top to his wig, my dear child——

Mrs. Air. Gives a fashionable turn to his face; and then adds to the height.

Air. It has indeed, my soul, a prodigious happy effect.—A block, popping out of a hair-cutter's window, up two pair of stairs in the Strand.—And then that bunch at his back——

Flaw. Hush! here comes the lady.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em.

This, madam, is the family for whom I told you I had so warm an affection; and this the young gentleman whose alliance I recommend for Miss.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Toby!

Mrs. Fl. I make no doubt, madam, but my niece will think herself happy in an union with so accomplished a person.

Air. Why, as to that, Toby, Mrs. —— what is the gentlewoman's name?

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'em.

Air. I recollect, madam, going some years ago with one of that name in the stage-coach to York—we were overturned about a mile beyond Newark—the parson of the parish—he became

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became afterwards a prebend of Worcester, in the room of old Walter Wench'em, who was cast in a suit of *crim. con.* by Sir Timothy Tallyhoe, remarkable for the best pack of hounds in the country——

Mrs. Air. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Aircraftle!

Flaw. Have a care! you have forgot.

Air. I am dumb.

Mrs. Fl. Pray, madam, has the young gentleman travelled?

Mrs. Air. Who? Toby?

Air. Why, madam, I did once intend—but Sir Roger Ramble—who I am told will be strongly opposed next election, for the borough of Barnstaple, by Sir Walter Win'em—who during the whole time of Sir Robert Walpole's admin——

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircraftle, I beg pardon, but the lady directed the question to me.

Air. True, my angel; and I am sure nobody can give a better answer than dear Mrs. Aircraftle——

Mrs. Air. You are very polite.

Air. But I was willing to save you the trouble, my soul.

Mrs. Air. I shall think it no trouble to satisfy the lady's enquiries.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, it was a matter of curiosity only:—There is, besides, an elegance, a *je ne
scai*

scail quoi, in your son's air, that is rarely acquired in this country.

Mrs. Air. Did not I tell you the prodigious power of grace?

Air. Yes; but I could never have believed it.

Mrs. Air. Pray, madam, is the young lady at home?

Mrs. Fl. Just lain down for a little: The change of climate has given her a slight indisposition; but a few days, I dare say, will restore her.

Mrs. Air. Miss, I presume, has a physician?

Air. A what? a physician, my life, for a little sea-sickness? Why, doctor Diet, at Margate, who, by the bye, intends to settle in London—his aunt, major Mortar's widow—who was killed by a bomb at the taking of Goree—Tom Truant, an old scoolfellow of mine, was close by his side—Tom Tru——

Mrs. Air. Dear Mr. Aircastle, what has all this to do with the young lady's illness?

Air. I was coming to that, my soul, if you will let me. I don't know how it happens; in general, nobody is better bred than Mrs. Aircastle; but to-day she won't let me bring out a word.—So, madam, Tom Truant, as I was—

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I must interrupt you!

L

Air,

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Air. You must?

Mrs. Air. I can't suffer it, upon this lady's account.

Air. It was for her sake, my soul, I was speaking.—So, madam, Tom Truant——

Mrs. Air. If you persist, I shall quit the house, I assure you!

Air. Quit the house?

Mrs. Air. This very instant!

Air. Zounds, madam, if you come to that, you may go to the——

Mrs. Air. Any where to get rid of your absurd——

Air. For that matter, you can't be more willing than I.

Mrs. Air. Then, madam, I take my leave.

Air. When you will: This lady and I can easily settle matters without you.—So, madam, as I was saying, Tom Tru——

Flaw. For Heaven's sake, Sir!—Mrs. Air-castle, be calm!—when things are just bringing to bear——

Air. All I meant was for the service of Miss.

Mrs. Fl. Very obliging, indeed. I should be sorry if any difference should arise on my niece's account: Besides, her illness is so trifling, that the young gentleman may, if he pleases, step into her room to enquire after her health.

Mrs.

Mrs. Air. Toby will be very happy, I am sure. You see, madam, what the lad is.

Mrs. Fl. A most agreeable youth, I must own; and then his silence is a modest mark of his merit.

Air. Do you hear that, Mrs. Air——

Mrs. Air. Yes; and I hope it will make a proper impression on you.—You, doubtless, madam, know the taste of your niece; may we hope that Toby has any chance of succeeding?

Mrs. Fl. She was prodigiously pleased with Mr. Flaw's account of his parents; which, indeed, I now find to be true in every respect.

Air. and Mrs. Air. Oh, madam!

Mrs. Fl. And as to fortune, she is totally careless in that, her own being much more than sufficient.

Air. How manly that is in a woman!—I remember Miss Patty Plumb of Jamaica did the very same—they say her grandfather was transported for robbing a hen-roost——

Mrs. Air. But as to his figure, madam; do you apprehend it will strike her? Toby, hold up your head!

Mrs. Fl. I can see no reason against it: Indeed, the young gentleman has rather a fairer complexion than what she has been commonly used

to; the natives of India, from their climate, have rather a fallower hue.

Mrs. Air. True, madam.

Mrs. Fl. But, if necessary, that may be easily altered by art; some saffron, or snuff, just skimmed over his face——

Mrs. Air. Quickly!

Air. I have a box of Scotch in my pocket: It may be done in an instant.

Mrs. Fl. Their hair, too, is most commonly dark; but a little German blacking here on each of the eyebrows——

Toby. If a burnt cork will do, I have one in my pocket.

Air. Mr. Flaw, will you ring for a candle?

Mrs. Fl. There is no necessity now: We have been obliged to shut out the light, as her eyes are rather tender and weak, with looking so long on nothing but water.

Mrs. Air. True, madam. Well, madam, we will detain you no longer: I am sure it is impossible to say how much we are obliged—— you may rely upon it, we shall ever be grateful.

Mrs. Fl. I don't in the least doubt it: Mr. Flaw has, I presume, hinted my situation?

Mrs. Air. Most minutely: Mr. Aircastle has prepared the deposit. You have the needful?

Air.

THE COZENERS. 77

Air. All but five hundred pounds, which you may have in the evening: I lent it just now to a—the story will make you laugh, I am sure: As I was going out, colonel—who commanded last war——

Mrs. Air. Is this a time for a story?

Flaw. Fy, fy! dispatch, Mr. Aircastle!

Mrs. Air. Here all the bills are.

Flaw. Nay, hold a little, I beg! This, you know, is a kind of compact; there are conditions to be performed on both sides: Therefore the money should, I think, be lodged in neutral hands, till the material point is complied with.

Mrs. Air. There is no occasion.

Mrs. Fl. I can have no objection, I am sure: where then shall we place it?

Mrs. Air. Mr. Flaw is a friend to both parties——

Air. True; the properest man in the world.

Mrs. Fl. I am not quite so certain of that.

[*Aside.*

Air. There, there the bills are, Mr. Flaw.

Mrs. Air. Now we will leave Toby and the lady together.

Air. Toby, don't forget to deliver the presents.

Toby. I have them here in a box.

Air. Mind your behaviour, my good lad!—I wish we had time though to doctor his face:

Against

78 THE COZENERS.

Against their next meeting, I will do it myself; I will manage that matter, I warrant: I learnt the art last autumn of a parcel of strollers—they had been playing, during the Dog-days, with one Foote in this town—a fellow, they say, takes people off, and——

Mrs. Air. Nay, Mr. Aircastle, come along, I beseech you!

Air. Well, well! you are always in such a damnable hurry!

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Flaw, you are not going, I hope? because I wanted just to speak a few words——

Flaw. I shall be back in a minute.

[*Exeunt Flaw, Mr. and Mrs. Aircastle.*]

Mrs. Fl. This, Sir, this is the door; tread softly.

Toby. Had not I better pull off my shoes?

Mrs. Fl. No occasion for that. [*Exeunt.*]

Another room. Marianne in bed.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em and Toby.

Mrs. Fl. This way! your hand!—Letty, my dear, the young gentleman I mentioned to you this morning, begs just to enquire after your health. There; I will leave you together: She is in the bed at the upper end of the room. I make no doubt, Sir, but you will behave with proper decorum.

[*Exit.*
Toby.]

THE COZENERS. 79

Toby. If you are afraid, you need not go out of the room.—The place is as dark as a dungeon! Upper end of the room! and how the deuce should I know which that is? in the night, I can tell you, I should be a good deal frightened to be so much in the dark, but it is well enough in the day, when one is about to make love; because why, one is not so bashful and shy; one can see to speak one's mind with more boldness and courage, than in the light.—*Me--Miss!* I thought she had spoke; may be not. If I could but get hold of the curtains—the best way will be to creep close by the wall, then I shall be sure to—*Miss! Miss!*

Mar. Who be dat dere?

Toby. I.—*Dat dere?* one may find out by her tongue she is a foreigner: I am pretty right now, I believe. What, Miss, are you sick?

Mar. Iss.

Toby. But you are better, I hope?

Mar. Iss.

Toby. I am glad on't: Then I suppose, Miss, if you please, I may begin to make love?

Mar. Iss.

Toby. Iss? gad, I think it is ready made to my hands.—Did the gentlewoman, Mrs. Madam your aunt, say any thing about; and concerning of me?

Mar.

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Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Is it a secret?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Oh, then it would not be manners to ax: Well, Miss, I hope you ben't averse to the match?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Adzooks, then we are all off in an instant! What, Miss, I suppose you ben't willing to have me?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Oh, then we are on again, as before: Then I may produce, I believe. I have brought you, Miss, some curiosities, by way of presentation, here in my pocket: Will you please to accept——

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Here, then, I offer them up to the shrine of thy beauty. May I crave leave to kiss your lily-white hand?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. On my knees let me thank you, fairest creature!—Her skin is vast soft. They be wonderful pretty things I have brought you; a'n't you mighty curious to see them?

Mrs. Ifs.

Toby. May I draw up the curtain a bit, only just to give you glimpse?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby.

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Toby. So I will.—I should be glad to have a peep at her too; she is a mighty agreeable body; does not talk much, indeed; but is vast sensible; whatever she says. This, I believe, is the string. I wonder if she is as handsome as Betsy Blossom: Gad, if she is, Miss Blossom must look out for somebody else, I can tell her. That's high enough, I believe.—That there thing in the leather-case is a watch; if you touch the knob that juts out, it strikes all the world like a clock; mother has one, but then him is as big as a warming-pan. Perhaps, Miss, you mayn't find the trick out: I'll shew you.—Hey! what is this? Lord have mercy on me! she is turned all of a sudden as black as a crow! sure as can be, a judgment for forsaking poor Betsy.

Mar. Massa, won't you come here?

Toby. Not I.

Mar. I come to you, den.

Toby. The devil you will! you must run pretty fast then.—Keep off me! holloa! house! stop the black thing that is hard at my—— [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em.

Mrs. Fl. The rude puppy had like to have run over me: What is the meaning—Ha, the curtain drawn up? nay then—Marianne, who opened the window?

M

Mar.

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Mar. Little Massa, to shew me de tick-tick—

Mrs. Fl. Fool, did not I tell you—But it was my own fault, to trust such an idiot! Go, get out of my sight! [*Exit Mar.*]

Enter Flaw.

Flaw. What the deuce is the matter? Toby is scampered down the street as if he had a legion of—

Mrs. Fl. Matter? why he has discovered the wench.

Flaw. 'Sdeath! I told you the folly of trusting these—we shall all be blown up in an instant: I saw the mother stop her chariot at the sight of the whelp; so I suppose we shall have her back in a—

Mrs. Fl. Ay? then something must be suddenly done.

Flaw. Done! but what?—I'll run after the boy, and hear his account of the matter.

Mrs. Fl. Stay! had not you better, Mr. Flaw, just leave with me Mr. Aircastle's deposit?

Flaw. Pho! time enough; is this a season to settle accounts? [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Fl. So! I suppose he will march off with the money at last: I would have done as much, if I could but have touched it.

Enter Mrs. Aircastle.

Mrs. Air. Dear madam, I am in the utmost
con-

confusion ! I am afraid that wild boy has misbehaved himself in some manner or other.

Mrs. Fl. A little mistake, madam ; but I protest my niece is so terrified, that she is unable to give me any account——

Mrs. Air. Some rude prank of his, I dare say ; I never could get his father——

Enter Colonel Gorget.

Gorget. The house is in such confusion, that I can't get any body to give me an answer.—
Mrs. Aircastle !

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Colonel Gorget ! who thought of meeting you here ?

Gorget. An odd affair ; but this lady, I suppose, *Mrs. Fleece'em*, will be so kind to explain it. A pretty young lad, an ensign of mine, has, I am afraid, been tricked out of a large sum of money by one *Flaw*, a fellow of very bad fame.

Mrs. Air. How ! *Flaw* ?

Gorget. Under pretence of gaining promotion by this lady's assistance.

Mrs. Fl. Mine, Sir ? I promise you this is the first mention I ever heard of the matter.

Gorget. Just, Madam, as I suspected : But pray, *Mrs. Aircastle*, have you long had the honour of this lady's acquaintance ?

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Mrs. Air. Acquaintance? Lord, colonel, I am terrified out of my wits. Your ear for a moment.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. A note, madam, which you are desired directly to read.

Mrs. Fl. Flaw's hand. [*Reads*]. "The game is up—we are blown—make off as fast as you can." As matters stand, the best advice I can take. [*Going off*].

Mrs. Air. Madam, you are not going to leave us?

Mrs. Fl. Only just to enquire how my niece does after her fright: I shall be back immediately. [*Exit*].

Gorget. How! is it possible? a capital sum? Good Heavens, madam, and how could you trust it without consulting some friend?

Mrs. Air. Why, we both thought Mr. Flaw—
Gorget. Flaw? an infamous—

Enter Mr. Aircastle.

Air. Why, what the deuce has been the matter amongst you? They tell me Toby has been at home frightened out of his wits; and then run out directly with the waiter and some wench or other:
I have

I have sent your Roger in search of the whelp.—

Ah, colonel, are you there?

Gorget. Came the minute before you.

Air. Well, colonel, hey, how? What, I suppose, by being here so soon, your affair has miscarried.

Gorget. You are mistaken indeed, my good friend.

Mrs. Air. What affair?

Air. I forgot to tell it you, child: Of a fine lass in this town, that sets up her person for sale——

Mrs. Air. How!

Air. And had the modesty to fix the price to the colonel at five hundred guineas.

Mrs. Air. Abominable! Can there be such creatures?

Air. Ask the colonel; that is all: An infamous harpy!

Gorget. Dear Mr. Aircastle, you are here in an error.

Air. Error? why, did not you tell me of a line she sent you?

Gorget. Very true.

Air. And did not I advance the cash?

Gorget. Do I pretend to deny it?

Air. Well then?

Gorget. Your patience a moment, my dear friend! I gave her the money, it is true——

Air.

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Air. There, Mrs. Aircraftle! did not I tell you——

Gorget. But then, like a woman of honour——

Air. Well?

Gorget. She told me that she did it but to try the strength of my passion——

Air. Pho, pho!

Gorget. And so immediately returned it again.

Air. Pshaw! a bam, Mrs. Aircraftle; don't believe it, my dear!

Gorget. To put the matter out of dispute, I returned to your lodging directly; when, not finding you, I delivered the cash to your lady.

Air. Indeed?

Gorget. In the very individual bag that you gave me; and before Master Toby, your son.

Air. Ay? and have you got the money, my dear?

Mrs. Air. Yes, yes; I received it.—Was ever woman so duped! but this town is full of Cozeners.

[*Aside.*

Gorget. I am afraid, Mr. Aircraftle, that it was pretty lucky for you I happened to have the cash in my hand.

Air. Lucky? I don't understand——

Gorget. Otherwise, it might have flown away with the rest.

Air. Flown away?

Gorget.

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Gorget. By what Mrs. Aircastle has told me, I shrewdly suspect you are got into the hands of some villainous sharpers.

Air. How!

Gorget. Mr. Flaw, and his coadjutrix.—Within! who's there?—But we shall soon get the business explained.

Enter a Servant.

Gorget. Do you live with the person who inhabits this house?

Serv. But a very short time.

Gorget. We wish to see her directly.

Serv. She is gone out.

Gorget. I thought so: And her niece too, I suppose?

Serv. Her niece, Sir?

Gorget. Ay.

Serv. I know no niece she has.

Air. and Mrs. Air. How!

Gorget. Just as I suspected: Now, Sir, do you begin to find what a situation you are in?

Air. Then I am totally ruined! I told you, Mrs. Aircastle, what would come of your—I remember Martin Moneytrap, of the Minories, was once in the very same way—he was taken in by a Portuguese Jew——

Gorget. A truce to recrimination, I beg! we
have

88 THE COZENERS.

have more material business in hand : Let this woman be directly pursued ; and endeavour to recover at least a part of——

O'Flan. [*without.*] Pray step in a bit, if you please, and refund freely the bill ; or, upon my soul, I'll make you do me the favour by force !

Enter O'Flannagan with Mrs. Fleece'em.

All. Mrs. Fleece'em ?

O'Flan. Yes, yes ; it is, sure enough ; she overtook me, as I met her hard by.

Gorget. We are obliged to you then for the lady's return ?

O'Flan. You may say that : I stopped her just in the nick, as she was sily walking off in a coach. Arrah, put off your hood, my dear honey ; don't be shame-faced amongst your friends and acquaintance.

Mrs. Fl. Stand off, you rude brute !

O'Flan. Better words, if you please ! You wanted to send me to be feathered abroad ; so, in return, I shall beg lave, madam, to pluck you at home.

Gorget. No violence to the lady I beg, Sir ! she now finds she is detected, and, I dare say, will do every body all the justice she can. And, first, madam, as to the capital sum which you had the address to obtain from this——

Mrs.

THE COZENERS. 89

Mrs. Fl. What concern have I in the business? the gentleman himself gave it into the possession of Flaw.

Gorget. Mr. Aircastle!

Air. That's true, I confess.

Gorget. But, since that, has not the property suffered a transfer?

Mrs. Fl. Not to me: But if you doubt it, you may search the house when you please.

Gorget. Then it has got into worse hands, I'm afraid.

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. I see by their confusion my information was right.—Not to interrupt you, madam, I should take it as a particular favour if you would immediately return the little note I left in your hands—for I have not a moment to spare.

Mrs. Fl. Note, madam? what note? I recollect, indeed, a hymn that you——

Mrs. Sim. Well, madam, that hymn, if you please.

Mrs. Fl. I gave it directly to Flaw, to get a friend of his to set it to musick.

Mrs. Sim. Musick? Ladies and gentlemen, a bank-note, I protest!

N

Air.

90 THE COZENERS.

Air. What! set a bank-note to musick? I never heard of such a thing.

Gorget. And pray, madam, what could induce you to trust that woman with a bank-note?

Mrs. Fl. That she will not so readily own; a little earnest of a much larger bribe, to procure her husband a living.

Gorget. How, madam! I hope your husband was not apprised of this application?

Mrs. Sim. The Doctor was totally ignorant; knew nothing about it.

Gorget. I am very happy to hear it: I should be sorry to find that a gentleman, whose peculiar duty it is to sustain the purity of his profession, should himself be the very person to soil it; or that an office of so sacred a nature, should be solicited by such un sanctified means.

Mrs. Sim. I believe my Doctor, Sir, will be hardly suspected: But I have not time to say more for the present; I shall be stay'd for, and have not a moment to spare. [Exit.

Gorget. Let her go! that plunder, however, is fair.

Air. Well, well! but, colonel, notwithstanding all that you say, I have heard there was a bet once made between the patron of a living and one Parson Plurality—Plurality had been

been a Presbyterian—his father keeps a pastry-cook's shop in Spring-gardens—just where Cox's Museum—by the bye, they tell me, Cox will get devilish rich by his lottery.

Gorget. But if we don't use some dispatch, I am afraid you will get devilish poor.

Enter Prig, in a waistcoat and cap.

Prig. Where is this damn'd infernal—she is burrow'd here, but I'll make her——

Air. Who the deuce can this be?

Mrs. Fl. Some madman escaped from his keepers, I reckon.

Prig. Yes, yes, I am escaped! but not mad: and if there is law to be had, I'll make you to know—keepers!—if I had not luckily met with some friends at the turnpike, I should have been kept pretty close, I believe. I recollected your footman that stood at the door, and guess'd you were not far off.

Air. What is this? a madman? I went to see one once in Bedlam—he—

[*Exit Prig.*]

Enter Roger.

Air. Oh, here is Roger. Well, did you find where Toby is?

Roger. Yes, yes, I found un out; and in sweet company too.

N 2

Air.

Mrs. Air. Company?

Roger. A clergyman, Betsy Blossom, and our waiter at home,

Air. Zounds! I hope the boy is not married.

Roger. No; but they would have been, if I had not come just in the nick to fetch un away.

Air. Where is he?

Roger. In a shop at the corner. I wanted un to step over; but he would not, because why, he says as how the house is haunted.

Air. And why not? There was the manor-house in the parish of Paddington—Mrs. Air-castle, you may remember it formerly belonged to the Jessops; but, by the marriage of the heiress with one of the Haslewoods——

Gorget. Come, come, it is a lucky prevention; and, to give you a little consolation, I believe I shall be able to recover your money from Flaw.

Mrs. Air. and Air. How, colonel?

Gorget. I took the liberty, by way of prevention, to get him secured for the money received of my ensign.

Air. Indeed?

Gorget. And, as this affair is rather of a criminal nature, he will think himself happy to escape by restoring the plunder.

Air. My kind colonel!

Gorget. I hope, madam, this will make you
amends

amends for your disappointment in the five hundred pounds. [*Aside.*]

O'Flan. But what the divil is all this to my bill?

Gorget. Did this woman receive it?

Mrs. Fl. Flaw had it; but it wants some days of being due.

Gorget. Then we shall be able to stop the payment, at least; it is safe, never fear.

O'Flan. That's lucky, however: And, by all I can hear, my best way, Mr. Colonel, will be to make an emigration back to Ireland again.

Gorget. By all means; and, by this time, many more of your countrymen would, I believe, be glad to follow your steps.

O'Flan. Like enough.

Air. And if, Mrs. Aircastle, we were to return back again——

Gorget. It would be the wisest thing you could do.

Mrs. Air. What, to vegetate, like a parcel of plants?

Gorget. Ay, madam; for there are trees that won't bear transplanting; they thrive best in their natural soil.

Air. That's true, I can answer. Last summer, I transplanted some elm-trees——

Gorget. Lord! Mr. Aircastle, how can you——

Air.

Air. Zounds! I must n't speak—Sir, let me tell you the story of the elm. [to *O'Flan.*]

Gorget. You, madam, till you have made all the satisfaction you can, must be contented to suffer a little confinement; after which, unless your country should have some other call upon you, you may dispose of yourself as you please.

Mrs. Fl. I am detected, distressed, and must therefore submit! But, gentlemen, if all who have offended like us, were like us produced to the public, much higher names would adorn the Old-Bailey Chronicle than those of poor Fleece'em and Flaw!



F I N I S.

In the Press, and will be published in a few Days,

The C O M E D I E S of

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The Devil Upon Two Sticks;

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